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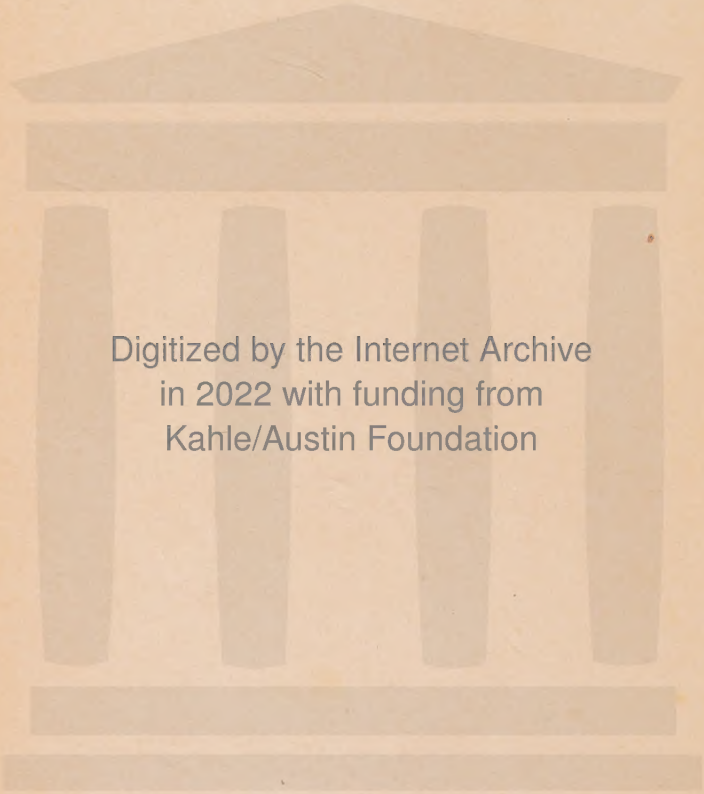
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# MORAL VALUES
## AND THE IDEA OF GOD

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# MORAL VALUES AND THE IDEA OF GOD

THE GIFFORD LECTURES
DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN IN 1914 AND 1915

BY

W. R. SORLEY, LITT.D., LL.D.

FELLOW OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY
KNIGHTBRIDGE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY
FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

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TO THE MEMORY OF

## CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY

ONE OF MANY THOUSANDS WHO GAVE
THEIR LIVES FREELY IN A GREAT CAUSE

*For they sought a country.*

"*Make Beauty and make Rest give place,*
*Mock Prudence loud—and she is gone,*
*Smite Satisfaction on the face,*
*And tread the ghost of Ease upon.*
*Light-lipped and singing press we hard*
*Over old earth which now is worn,*
*Triumphant, buffeted and scarred,*
*By billows howled at, tempest torn,*
*Toward blue horizons far away.*"

## *THE GIFFORD TRUST*

"*I Having been for many years deeply and firmly convinced that the true knowledge of God, that is, of the Being, Nature, and Attributes of the Infinite, of the All, of the First and the Only Cause, that is, the One and Only Substance and Being, and the true and felt knowledge (not mere nominal knowledge) of the relations of man and of the universe to Him, and of the true foundations of all ethics and morals, being, I say, convinced that this knowledge, when really felt and acted on, is the means of man's highest well-being, and the security of his upward progress, I have resolved, from the 'residue' of my estate as aforesaid, to institute and found, in connection, if possible, with the Scottish Universities, lectureships or classes for the promotion of the study of said subjects, and for the teaching and diffusion of sound views regarding them....*

"*The lecturers appointed shall be subjected to no test of any kind, and shall not be required to take any oath, or to emit or subscribe any declaration of belief, or to make any promise of any kind; they may be of any denomination whatever, or of no denomination at all (and many earnest and high-minded men prefer to belong to no ecclesiastical denomination); they may be of any religion or way of thinking, or as is sometimes said, they may be of no religion, or they may be so-called sceptics or agnostics or freethinkers, provided only that the 'patrons' will use diligence to secure that they be able reverent men, true thinkers, sincere lovers of and earnest inquirers after truth....*

"*I wish the lecturers to treat their subject as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible sciences, indeed, in one sense, the only science, that of Infinite Being, without reference to or reliance upon any supposed special exceptional or so-called miraculous revelation.... The lecturers shall be under no restraint whatever in their treatment of their theme....*

"*The lectures shall be public and popular, that is, open not only to students of the Universities, but to the whole community without matriculation, as I think that the subject should be studied and known by all, whether receiving University instruction or not. I think such knowledge, if real, lies at the root of all well-being....*

"*And my desire and hope is that these lectureships and lectures may promote and advance among all classes of the community the true knowledge of Him Who is, and there is none and nothing besides Him, in Whom we live and move and have our being, and in Whom all things consist, and of man's real relationship to Him Whom truly to know is life everlasting.*" (From Lord Gifford's Will, dated 21 August, 1885.)

# PREFACE

I HAVE quoted some sentences from the remarkable document which instituted the Gifford Lectureships, for it contains matter of permanent interest. Lord Gifford was deeply convinced that the knowledge which he sought to promote was of importance for human well-being; he wished to make it accessible to those outside, as well as to those within, academic circles; he had confidence in reason and left his lecturers free to follow whithersoever the argument might lead; and he himself gave a description of the kind of knowledge which he had in view. In this description he coupled "the true foundations of all ethics and morals" with "the true knowledge of God." The present work is concerned with the relation between these two topics. The point of view from which that relation is regarded is not the most common one; but neither is it by any means novel. Many philosophers have held that ethical ideas have a bearing on the view of the universe which we are justified in forming, and they have allowed their thinking to be influenced by these ideas. Since Kant proclaimed the primacy of the practical reason in a certain regard, this point of view has been adopted by thinkers of different schools, and reasons have been urged in its support. But a systematic investigation of the validity of the procedure is still lacking. We must ask, What is the justification for using ethical ideas, or other ideas of value, in philosophical construction? In what way, if at all, can they be used legitimately? And what effect have

they upon our final view of the world? A systematic investigation of these questions has been attempted in the present volume.

The lectures of which the book consists were delivered in the University of Aberdeen in the summer terms of 1914 and 1915. Although nearly a year elapsed between the tenth lecture and the eleventh, the whole is intended to be a continuous argument. In carrying out this argument, no attempt has been made to give a critical survey of contemporary thinking on the topics which arise for discussion. To have done so would have been to extend unduly the length of the book. And a survey of this kind has now been rendered unnecessary by the work of my friend and predecessor in the Gifford Lectureship, Professor Pringle-Pattison. Through criticism of recent philosophy he has elicited a view akin to that which I have reached in another way. Both the similarity and the difference are indicated by the title of my book.

A few days before my appointment to the Gifford Lectureship, I was honoured with an invitation to give a course of Hibbert Lectures on Metaphysics at Manchester College, Oxford. These lectures were delivered in the winter of 1913–14, and for them the greater portion of the material now published was first drafted. This material was revised and enlarged before it was given at Aberdeen; and the whole has been again revised, with additions in some places and omissions in others, in preparation for the press. In present circumstances it is perhaps unnecessary to apologise for the delay in its appearance.

My obligations to other writers—not least to those from whom I differ—are too numerous to mention, and

they are inadequately acknowledged in footnotes. In conclusion, I should like to express my gratitude to the Senatus of the University of Aberdeen for re-calling me to the University as a Gifford Lecturer. To many old friends in Aberdeen, and especially to Dr Davidson and Dr Baillie, the professors of philosophy, my thanks are due for much kindness and encouragement.

W. R. S.

*August* 1918.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In preparing this edition I have kept in view the criticisms of the book which have come into my hands, but I have not introduced new matters of controversy. The few errors which have been pointed out by others or discovered by myself have been corrected silently; and certain portions of the argument, where experience has shown that there was a possibility of misunderstanding, have been made clearer and more pointed in statement. The only addition which needs to be recorded is a short discussion on the relation of foreknowledge to freedom, a topic dealt with too dogmatically in the first edition.

W. R. S.

*December* 1920.

Only a few alterations have been made in revising the book for the third edition.

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# I

## THE PROBLEM

THE purpose of the present work is to enquire into the bearing of ethical ideas upon the view of reality as a whole which we are justified in forming. The argument begins with a discussion of values and ends with the idea of God. In this way it reverses the traditional order of procedure which seeks first for an interpretation of reality, founded upon scientific generalisations or upon the conceptions involved in knowledge, and then goes on to draw out the ethical consequences of the view that has been reached. This traditional method has some advantage on the ground of simplicity. It concerns itself at first solely with what is and does not allow itself to be disturbed by the intrusion of the alien conception of value or of what ought to be. It is true also that the idea a man forms of the nature of things as a whole can hardly fail to affect his view as to what is of highest worth and thus lead on to ethical consequences. But, for this very reason, it is necessary that the basis of our theory of reality should be as broad and complete as possible; and it will lack breadth and completeness if moral facts and ideas have been excluded at the outset. The facts of morality as they appear in the world, and the ideas of good and evil found in man's consciousness, are among the data of experience. If we overlook them in constructing our theory of reality, we

carry out the methods and results of science. But it has not been worked into his system, and his words remain the record of a personal belief whose logical position is uncertain. We may be tempted to ask whether we are to take them for anything more than this—an expression of the author's individuality, which we may accept or reject as our subjective preferences dictate? If this were all, it would be useless to pursue the matter further. Yet Lotze himself sometimes encourages us to take this view; and the connexion in which the dictum makes its appearance raises a question. His argument is over when he says that the true beginning of metaphysics lies in ethics; and it was not from ethics that his own beginning was made. He began with the difficulties and contradictions that confront the thinker when he tries to understand the connexion of things; and he overcame these difficulties by postulating an inner substantial unity of all reality which solves the contradiction of transeunt causation. It is not until the end of his work that he throws out the suggestion that the secret of reality can be revealed only by the ethical 'ought,' and that this should form the starting-point of a metaphysical enquiry.

The terms in which the dictum is stated seem precise enough; but they do not pretend to be exact; and, as Lotze himself has not worked out the doctrine, it is unnecessary to lay stress on his form of statement. The view which he indicates is opposed to the prevailing opinion of philosophers, but yet it is sufficiently familiar at the present day. It is, in short, this: that ethical ideas, or, more generally, ideas about value or worth, have a certain primacy for, or at least have an important and legitimate bearing upon, the interpretation of reality.

This is the postulate expressed in its most general terms; but, as thus expressed, it might be used, and has been used, to cover various meanings.

One possible meaning may be mentioned, in the first place, which might be accepted without entailing any modification of the traditional data or method of philosophy. The function of ethical ideas in interpreting reality may be very real and important; but it may be in place only after some general view of the nature of the world has been established. It is a consequence of theism, for instance, that the cosmic process is regarded as expressing a divine and therefore good purpose, so that, in the further interpretation of that process, ethical ideas have a legitimate and necessary function. But the function of ethical ideas is, in this case, secondary and consequential: their place and use depend on the prior establishment of theism—to be more precise, of an ethical theism. It would be incorrect to assert that this was all that Lotze meant by his dictum, though it is a view which is definitely suggested by the line of argument in the *Metaphysic*. But it was not his full meaning; and, if it had been, it would not have been of great significance. It does not put ethics at the beginning of metaphysics; it would not require to be promulgated as marking a divergence from traditional methods; and it would ignore all the difficulties which arise in attempting to establish an ethical theism without a previous enquiry into ethical facts and principles. It is simply to distinguish it from other and more important meanings of the same general statement that this possible meaning of it has to be referred to at all.

The principle, if it is to be significant of a type of

philosophy, must mean that ethical ideas are not merely of importance in philosophical construction, but that they have a place at the basis of the structure—that our metaphysics must be founded on ethics, that in our idea of the 'ought' we are to discover at least a guide to a true idea of the 'is.'

This principle has sometimes been taken as implying or justifying what may be called a subjective ground for determining the nature of objective reality. Here, accordingly, we may distinguish a second meaning which has been put upon the dictum. Ethical ideas have a direct bearing upon practice. What we say ought to be becomes for us a demand that it shall be; it is potentially an object of desire and determines our wishes and conduct. In this way the whole inner world not of obligation only but also of desire and wish combines to make a demand upon reality; and no view of reality is accepted as one in which the whole consciousness can find rest unless it commend itself by satisfying this practical need as well as the demands of the reason. On this ground, it is sometimes held, reality must be not merely what we find it to be, or what our reason convinces us that it is, but also what we need or wish or very earnestly desire that it shall be. "Things," says William James[1], "reveal themselves soonest to those who most passionately want them." The statement is true, and he has also given the true reason for it: "for our need sharpens our wit." Things are not what they are because we want them so to be; but they are revealed to the man who has wit to discover them, and his wit is often sharpened by his need to know. To go fur-

[1] *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 176.

ther than this, and to say that reality must satisfy our wants, is to assume beforehand a whole view of the world and of its adaptation to human emotion and desire. It would be to beg the questions which we are setting out to discuss, and it would be to take the less stable factors in human nature as the standard of truth.

It is therefore important to point out that the dictum that ethics lies at the basis of metaphysics may be interpreted in a third way, which avoids the apparent subjectivity which attaches to the meaning just mentioned. It may be held that our final view of reality must be based upon experience; that this experience must be taken in its whole range, and must not be arbitrarily limited to the data of perception which intelligence works up into science; that the appreciation of moral worth, or of value generally, is as true and immediate a part of our experience as the judgments of perception; and that it, as well as they, forms a part of the data of metaphysics. Further, it may be contended that, just as the data of sense-experience are found to manifest certain regularities from which 'laws of nature,' as they are called, may be inferred, so also in our moral experience a certain law or order can be discovered, with a claim to be regarded as objective, which may be compared with the similar claim made on behalf of natural law. If we take experience as a whole, and do not arbitrarily restrict ourselves to that portion of it with which the physical and natural sciences have to do, then our interpretation of it must have ethical data at its basis and ethical laws in its structure. It is the validity and consequences of this view that I propose to discuss.

Before entering upon this enquiry it may be well to clear the way by a short review of the types of thought to which it is opposed and from which, historically, it is a re-action. Kant's doctrine has led to a number of views which differ from one another in detail and even in fundamental points. But all of them might be described, in his phrase, as asserting and depending upon the primacy, or at least fundamental importance, of the practical reason. In this respect they may be contrasted with the prevalent or orthodox tradition of most philosophical schools. These have attributed primacy to the theoretical reason, and to the practical reason they have assigned a secondary and subsidiary place. In general, the question of the relation of the practical to the theoretical reason has not been discussed. It has been assumed, as something too obvious for defence or even for statement, that we have first to find out the true nature of things, and that the rule and end for conduct and the meaning of value will then be plain. Reason is one, and the theory of reality is expected at the same time to be, or easily to lead to, a theory of goodness. This assumption is not peculiar to one school of philosophy, but is shared by various schools, though each may have a different way of putting the matter. What is common to them all is that an enquiry, which, in data as well as method, is purely theoretical, leads—somehow or other—to ethical results. In this way the ethical principles of Rationalism, of Idealism, and of Naturalism are often arrived at.

At a certain point these theories all pass from propositions about reality or what 'is' to propositions about goodness or what 'ought to be.' They make a transition

to a new predicate; and the difficulty for them lies in justifying this transition. This is the crucial question for the whole class of theories which found their ethical doctrines upon a metaphysics which, at the start and up to a certain point, was not ethical. We may describe these systems generally as systems of metaphysical ethics; and, in seeking to understand them, we have to put the question, how do they pass from being to goodness, from 'is' to 'ought'? The question is not altogether easy to answer, just because as a rule they do not recognise the difficulty of making the transition and even ignore that a transition to a new order of conceptions is being made. But I think that two methods may be distinguished, by which the transition has actually been made or attempted. On one of these methods ethics is regarded as simply an application of theoretical or metaphysical principles to a new material—to the material of conduct or of conscious volition. The relation of ethics to metaphysics is, on this view, similar to the relation of mechanics to mathematics. Mechanics deals with the application of mathematical laws or formulæ to masses and molecules, and in the same way ethics applies metaphysical truths to conduct or volition. Reason is held to become practical by virtue of its new subject-matter, that is to say, by being applied to practice or conduct: the principles remain the same; only the application is different. This is one kind of metaphysical ethics; and it is that which characterises a Rationalist or Intellectualist school of thought, such as Cartesianism. But a similar method is also frequently adopted by the exponents of that form of scientific philosophy called Naturalism. Another way of proceeding from theo-

retical to ethical conceptions may be traced in Idealisms of the Hegelian type or approximating to that type. According to this method we pass from the non-ethical to ethical conceptions by criticism of the former. This criticism, it is held, brings out a meaning which is really implicit in the conceptions with which we started, though it was not at first seen to be there. The dialectic of the notion compels us to advance from the relatively abstract stage in which no ethical content was apparent to the more concrete stage in which an ethical meaning becomes explicit. It is important to understand how these two methods work, and how they deal with the special difficulties which they encounter. They must therefore be considered separately.

1. The most characteristic of all systems of Rationalism is that of Descartes and his followers. According to him knowledge is one, and its method is always the same. "All knowledge," he says, "is of the same nature throughout, and consists solely in combining what is self-evident[1]." The type to which every kind of knowledge must conform, if it is to be truly knowledge, is, in his opinion, mathematical demonstration. In mathematics we start with self-evident propositions and pass from one proposition to another by means of a chain of reasoning, each link in which is clearly a true proposition. The chain cannot be endless; that is why a special class of self-evident propositions is needed at the outset. All our ordinary scientific or philosophical propositions depend ultimately upon some primary proposition or propositions, assumed as self-evident; but each step which

[1] *Regulæ ad directionem ingenii*, xii; *Philosophical Works*, transl. Haldane and Ross, vol. 1, p. 47.

connects the later proposition with the earlier must also be equally evident. We accept the proposition *p* because it is evident that it follows from *q*; and we accept *q* because it is evident that it follows from *r*, and so on; but sooner or later we must reach a proposition whose truth does not depend on its implication by any other proposition. Descartes speaks sometimes as if there were only one such proposition—the assertion by the thinker of his own conscious existence; and this was certainly for him the only self-evident proposition which had existence as its predicate. But it is clear that he admits as ultimate and self-evident a number of other propositions, such as the mathematical axioms and the axiom of causality. From these self-evident propositions every other scientific truth is arrived at by means of clear and evident steps.

What then are we to say of the first ethical proposition that enters into a system of thought of this kind—the first proposition, that is to say, that has 'good' or some similar ethical concept as its predicate? Of two things one: either this proposition is self-evident and without dependence on a preceding proposition, or else it is implied by some preceding proposition which, *ex hypothesi*, is not an ethical proposition. If the former is the case, then the ethical proposition marks a new beginning, and is not derived from any set of purely theoretical propositions; and it must be recognised as having independent validity, if not necessarily primacy or control over others, when the thinker proceeds to unify or systematise his knowledge and attempt an interpretation of things as a whole. In the latter case—if it is held to be evident that a certain ethical proposition follows from a non-ethical proposition—further questions arise.

Now the former of these alternatives is adopted by many writers who, by reason of their method, may be counted among the Rationalists. It is the prevailing doctrine of the Intuitional moralists and may be found in the Scholastics before them. Certain ethical propositions—such as those that affirm that justice, veracity, and the common welfare are good—are held to be self-evident, not derived from mathematical, causal, or any other purely theoretical propositions. When this position is taken up ethics as a science is not made dependent upon metaphysics. It is allowed a place of its own. Ethical truths and truths of theoretical philosophy will be regarded as arrived at in the same way, and they will be dealt with by the same rational methods; but there will be no primacy of one over the other; if metaphysics is not a result of ethics, neither is ethics derived from metaphysics. And this method, so far as regards ethics, has been often employed by writers like Richard Price, who have not worked out any metaphysical system, as well as by others—Reid, for example—whose ethical doctrine is part of a general philosophical view. Such theories do not derive their ethical principle from an antecedent and non-ethical metaphysics, though any comprehensive or philosophical view of this kind must show in what way ethical and theoretical propositions can be combined into a system.

If, on the other hand, we take the latter line of thought, and derive ethical truths from non-ethical premisses—as the Cartesians generally, and Geulincx in particular, seem to have wished to do—then also our ethical propositions must begin somewhere. There must be some proposition which, in our system, contains for

the first time an ethical notion; and we shall accept this proposition not because, standing by itself, it is self-evident, but because it is implied by a preceding proposition which, *ex hypothesi*, does not contain any ethical notion. How is it possible for this to be? Where are the non-ethical premisses which, of themselves, justify an ethical conclusion?

This question is never faced, so far as I can make out. Goodness is found in different directions by different thinkers of the same school. Sometimes, as by Geulincx, it is held to belong only to the will, which is powerless to effect changes in the world of sense but is supreme in its own narrow field. Sometimes, as by Spinoza, it is regarded as belonging to the knowledge and realisation of one's own being as a mode of the ultimate reality. But, whatever the subject of our proposition when we say "this being, or this kind of life, or this attitude, is good," the predicate 'good' enters as a new notion which is superadded to, and not derived from, the logical or mathematical or causal relations already involved. Self-evidence may be claimed for the ethical proposition itself, but it is never shown to be logically implied by the antecedent propositions. They have been on a different plane of thought. The assertion of goodness is not really arrived at by deduction from any assertions about existence; it marks the beginning of a new line of thought. Thus it was that the Rationalists of the seventeenth century failed to get to ethics by way of logical deduction from principles about knowledge and reality which were not themselves ethical, and by a method which was imitated from mathematical proof.

In very much the same way, the Naturalists of the

nineteenth century failed in their attempt to reach ethical propositions by an extension of causal propositions. If we take Spencer as representing this view, we may find in him the promise of a new and scientific doctrine in which ethical principles shall have their true place in a universal and systematic philosophy, wherein everything is to be deduced from the doctrine of the persistence of force. But the promise of proof is not kept: it is broken just at the point where its fulfilment would have been of the greatest interest—when consciousness emerges from the play of competing physiological reflexes. After this point the pretence of deduction is cast aside. Causation, however, is still the clue; and we look for the transition from the causal to the ethical judgment. The chain of causation is crossed, however, in Spencer's exposition by a new line of argument, when he quietly assumes as self-evident a proposition which is not causal at all, but strictly ethical—the proposition that pleasure and pleasure alone is good. The line of cause and effect is not altogether deserted by him; and other exponents of evolutionary ethics keep to it more consistently. In all their expositions, however, one truth becomes apparent: that, as long as the argument is logical, it has no ethical consequences; and that, when ethical propositions enter, they have not been reached by any logical process. It is not always that writers are content, with the naïveté of Sir Francis Galton, to formulate the 'new duty' of following evolution[1]; they more frequently pass from the assertion of a certain evolutionary tendency to the assumption that it has ethical value, without stopping to reflect on the audacious leap they have taken over

[1] F. Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty*, p. 337.

a logical fence[1]. Nevertheless, their service to clear thought on this subject has been none the less real because it has been unintentional. Their exposition has made clearer than ever the distinction which they have so palpably ignored—the distinction between 'is' and 'ought,' between existence and value or goodness. And unwittingly they have done the good service of drawing attention to the tendency to overlook this distinction—a tendency shown in other systems of philosophy as well as in their own.

2. Ethical ideas, we may therefore assert, are not due simply to the application of metaphysical or theoretical conceptions to the subject-matter of conduct. This method of metaphysical ethics will not work. There remains the other and more promising method. According to it the purely theoretical conceptions with which metaphysics begins are inadequate to the interpretation of reality, but criticism of them reveals a content which was not present, or at least was not explicit, at the outset. In this way these initial conceptions lead on by a logical process to the conceptions which express the ethical nature of reality.

This method has its classical expression in Hegel's dialectic. He passes, by successive steps, from the most formal and empty of all conceptions to the fullest and most concrete. The logical evolution of the notion begins with a conception completely void of content and, by its own characteristic logic, advances to mind or spirit. "This," says Hegel, "is the supreme definition of the Absolute." But "the essential feature of mind or spirit

[1] The ethical system of Naturalism has been examined in an earlier work, to which reference may be made: see *Ethics of Naturalism*, 2nd ed., 1904.

is liberty," and this free mind expresses itself in morality and law[1]. Questions of difficulty arise at each step of the long argument by which this result is reached. But the method followed is, at least, a conceivable method; and, as it shows the derivation of the ethical notion, it might appear that an independent study of the latter and of its implications would be unnecessary, and that its meaning is to be ascertained by examining the logical conditions which determine its place in the evolution of the notion.

It is, however, only on one of the possible interpretations of a dialectic process that this view of the matter can be maintained. With Hegel himself, we may lay stress on what may be called the intellectual character of the process, and assert that the development of thought is a purely inner development: the might of the notion will then be looked upon as producing from its own nature the whole fulness of the life of the spirit. 'Being' logically equates with 'nothing,' and yet there is a transition from one to the other, and this transition is 'becoming': and so through the whole gamut of categories until we reach the morality and law of civilised society. Now, if it is the mere might of the notion that is at work here, the last stage must be from the first implicit in the earliest. We shall be compelled to regard the whole process of evolution traced in the dialectic as the philosophical analogue of the old biological notion of preformation, according to which the germ contains within itself, in ultra-microscopic minuteness, all the wealth of the organism with which it is continuous. Evolution, as interpreted by the preformation theory in

[1] *Encyklopädie*, §§ 382, 384, 487.

contrast with the theory of epigenesis, is simply the expansion of characters and parts always present but too small at first to be visible. In this sense the full-grown organism was supposed to be implicit in the cell from which it originated. Does 'implicit' have the same meaning when the term is used of the logical evolution? Are the spirits of just men made perfect implicit, in this sense, in the bare notion 'being' with which Hegel starts? Is their essence already contained in it, however indistinctly, and however much in need of the microscopic power of the *Logic* to bring it to light? If it is, then it is impossible that this 'being' so full of character can be the same as nothing: and the dialectic refuses to march.

That this view of the dialectic is "a mere caricature" of all that is valuable in Hegel may well be admitted. Hegel himself tried to distinguish his method from the preformation theory of evolution. It is "only ideally or in thought," he said, "that the earlier stage virtually involves the later[1]." "Before the mind," says Mr Bradley, "there is a single conception, but the whole mind itself, which does not appear, engages in the process, operates on the *datum*, and produces the result[2]." In this operation the mind must surely impart something from its own fulness; and in the process it is always receiving new data which affect its operation. The mind never has simply a single conception before it, any more than it has ever a simple idea of the Locke-Hume variety. We admit, in this way, that the evolution of the notion resembles epigenesis—that the development of thought includes the assimilation of new experience.

[1] *Encyklopädie*, § 161. [2] *Principles of Logic*, p. 381.

And if we do this, we give up the old view of logical evolution, as much as the biologists of to-day have given up the old view of organic evolution. We admit the fact of epigenesis. The development of an organism is not a process of unrolling or expanding material which has been present all along. The organism is related to its environment by give and take, and its growth is conditioned by this interaction. Does not something similar hold true of the process by which thought advances to new and more adequate conceptions of reality?

If we adopt this view a dialectical development of concepts will still be possible; but it will not claim to be determined at each stage simply by the mere content of the preceding concepts. The concept will be regarded as having for its function the knowledge of an object, and its nature will lie in this function. As we ascend from less to more adequate concepts, our test of adequacy will be not merely inner freedom from contradiction, but also ability to describe and interpret reality; and our concepts will be formed for the purpose of including the new material which experience presents. From this point of view the relation of concepts and of the sciences becomes intelligible. Mathematical concepts, for example, do not pretend to exhaust the nature of the real world. They exhibit certain abstract relations only, and are in this way inadequate to knowledge of reality, and indeed professedly inadequate. But this inadequacy is not the result of an inherent contradiction or of any defect in the concepts themselves. On the contrary they admit of indefinite elaboration without falling into contradiction. It is only if we use them for a purpose for which they are not fitted—if we attempt through them

alone to understand any concrete situation—that there is discrepancy between what is to be explained and what is explained. Neither the wish of a man nor the fall of a pebble can be accounted for by mathematics alone. And, while they make plain their own inadequacy to describe the full nature of the concrete, they give no hint as to the kind of concepts by which they have to be supplemented in order to serve this purpose. In the same way, when it is argued that mechanism is inadequate to account for vital processes, it is not meant that mechanism is a self-contradictory system, but only that it is insufficient for the explanation of certain facts or of certain aspects of facts. And so at each step where one concept is replaced by another. Throughout our procedure intellect never works *in vacuo*; it is an effort after the understanding of an object, of reality. For a fuller view of reality new concepts are needed, and these new concepts are not derived, dialectically or otherwise, merely from antecedent concepts. In no case do concepts appear out of the empty intellect independently of the material of experience. They are a way of dealing with and ordering such material, and their entry into consciousness is determined thereby. Our intellectual concepts of cause and purpose, for instance, are based upon experiences in our own activity; and the same is true of our ethical concepts.

These reflexions are not put forward as supplying the place of a full examination of metaphysical ethics. But they may serve to prepare the mind for a constructive effort of a different kind by showing the fundamental difficulties in the way of any theory which seeks to derive ethical notions from notions which are not ethical. The

same problem confronts all such theories—the problem of accounting for the introduction of an ethical concept into the argument. And, whatever the special method they adopt, these different theories betray the same obscurity at the crucial point. The rationalist hesitates to say whether his first ethical proposition is in its own nature self-evident, or is implied by non-ethical propositions. The latter alternative has never been put forward clearly; and the former alternative allows an independent beginning for ethics. The difficulty is similar if the dialectical evolution of concepts be followed. Non-ethical concepts are inadequate for the description of an experience which includes moral factors; they may prove their own inadequacy, but they do not themselves supply the deficiency. The ethical concept could never have been evolved out of non-ethical antecedents and without the help of moral experience; and this experience must therefore be taken into account by any metaphysics which professes to be ethical.

The fault which is to be found with metaphysical ethics is, in the end, just this, that its data are insufficient. It tends to disregard that portion of experience which is of greatest importance for its purpose, namely, moral experience. It bases ethics upon metaphysics, and metaphysics is an interpretation of experience; but it starts from a limited view of experience, and tries to pass to ethical concepts without taking into account those factors in experience which are relevant to the later enquiry, though they may not have been required for the earlier stages. The data of experience which philosophy has to interpret are not limited to sense-perception and the material of scientific knowledge;

they include the facts of desire and volition which are formative forces in the structure of life; and, in addition, they include also the experience of moral approval and disapproval and, generally, the whole appreciation of value. This last is the special region of experience from which ethical concepts arise. It is a marked accompaniment of the active life—of the life of desire and volition—but it reacts upon and colours the whole of experience.

It may be allowed that, when we occupy ourselves with this aspect of experience, it has a tendency to divert our attention from the purely logical or purely causal order in which the scientific intelligence regards its objects; it may thus interfere with the spirit of pure science; and, for that reason, it may be well to banish sternly from our minds the attitude of moral or æsthetic appreciation when our purpose is simply to understand the connexions of phenomena. The more severely we keep to the logical and causal points of view the better it will be for our mathematical and physical knowledge. The perfection of these sciences depends upon their limitation; and the more perfect they are, the more clearly are they separated from ethical appreciation, and the more impossible is it to pass directly from the logical or causal to the ethical judgment. The latter is based upon an aspect of experience overlooked or deliberately disregarded by the sciences, and deals with it by the use of concepts which would have been confusing and irrelevant in mathematics or physics. But the aspect which science neglects is none the less fundamental in life. And, when we clearly recognise the importance of this phase of experience—the facts of moral approval and

disapproval, that is to say—we are prepared to recognise the unique position of the ethical concept. This justifies an independent beginning for ethics itself, and at the same time leads us to expect that moral experience and ethical ideas may have a contribution of their own to make to the interpretation of the world.

This formulates our problem. Morality is a factor in experience; ethical ideas have a place in consciousness. Our theory of reality as a whole must take account of these things; and the question concerns the difference which they make in our final view of the world and in the arguments which lead up to that view. To approach this question systematically it will be necessary to devote a little time to the description of ethical ideas and their place in experience, so that we may be prepared to decide whether there is any truth in the dictum that we must seek in that which *should be* for the ground of that which *is*.

Introductory discussion of the nature of values.

## II

## VALUES

PHILOSOPHY is a result of the contemplative attitude to things, in which man observes them and reasons about them, but does not himself take part in bringing about the events which he seeks to understand. It is born of leisure, therefore. The work of thought may be strenuous enough itself; it must necessarily be strenuous to attain its end; but, for this very reason, it requires a mind aloof from affairs, withdrawn from the ordinary business of life, indifferent to the practical activity which leaves little room for contemplation and disturbs its serenity. The thinker is expected to regard all things with equal mind; his business is with their nature and connexions only; he is the servant of truth alone, and, at its demand, it is held that he must put aside the common prejudice in favour of the good or beautiful or useful.

The growth of science also encourages the same attitude. Science, it is true, is distinguished from philosophy by the multiplicity and importance of its practical applications. The present time, beyond all others, is the day of the achievements of applied science, and it is for the sake of its application to the arts of life that science itself is held in honour by an impatient public. The connexion is very close between principles and application: the latter would not exist were it not for the

former; and the former would lose encouragement and stimulus—would perhaps never have been recognised —had it not been for their promise of a power over the environment which should minister to man's desires. But, even with a view to their subsequent applications to practical affairs, it is not well that the man of science should have these interests constantly before his eyes. The practical interest is apt to interfere with the theoretical interest, to make impartiality difficult and to weaken the concentration of mind which successful enquiry needs. Hence the current and familiar specialisation. In the foreground is the inventor who ministers to the demands of industry; behind him stands the scientific enquirer who, by an arduous method, discovers the principles which another puts to practical use. The sphere of values is accordingly assigned to the inventor and taken out of the hands of the scientific discoverer.

Further, it is recognised that the world is a process of evolution, or at least that it is in continual change. But mere change cannot be made an object of knowledge. Thought seeks the permanent within or behind the changes; and it is only in so far as constant factors can be discovered in it that the changing process becomes the object of knowledge. The contrast between the flux of experience and conceptual fixity has even led certain thinkers to adopt the view that the intellect necessarily tends to pervert reality by substituting a fixed concept for that which actually is always in process of change or growth. With this view we are not at present concerned. But it is true that science looks for constancies, for the permanent law rather than for the changing event. Even if it be true that change is

as necessary to permanence as permanence is to change, the preference of science is for the permanent.

The same attitude is apt to persist even when man and his ideals are the object of reflexion. It is often forgotten that man himself is an agent in the world's changing course, and that his agency is determined by his ideals: that he selects between possible lines of action and that his selection may be determined by his judgment of what is good or better. Human agency is thus one of the factors of that world of experience which both science and philosophy set out to explain; and human agency is affected by conceptions or ideals of value. In this way values belong to the object which we have to explain when man himself is included among the objects of enquiry. Further, as a fact of mental life, the experience or consciousness of value is as fundamental as the experience or consciousness of events. Man is not a cognitive being in the first instance, and only thereafter an active being. Knowledge is sought by him in virtue of some interest; and the interest in knowledge for its own sake is a late acquisition. Primarily, he seeks to know in order that he may turn his knowledge to some use beyond the mere knowledge: it has to serve to control his environment or to adapt him to it. He wishes to understand a thing because understanding it will make him in some degree its master. The attitude of valuation, accordingly, may even be said to have priority in the development of mind over the attitude of cognition.

The primary experience, on which all later views of the world and of self are built, is not perceptive merely, it is also appreciative. It involves in every part some

consciousness or appreciation of worth or value, as well as the consciousness of objects as existing and changing. The distinction between the two attitudes itself belongs to the growth of mind. The primary experience is at once perceptive and appreciative; its object is both an existence and a value; but the two elements have to be discriminated for the sake of understanding and of practice alike. The whole system of scientific knowledge is arrived at by means of a preliminary abstraction —by restricting attention to the nature and laws of the things observed and disregarding the element of value which they are experienced as somehow possessing or entailing. And this abstraction is itself a selection determined by an interest. By a similar and equally valid abstraction we may concentrate attention on the aspect of value, which is omitted by the sciences, and construct a theory of value which will supplement, and in some sense correspond with, the scientific theory of facts and relations. The final problem will concern the relation of the two systems, when thought seeks in the end to restore the harmony into which it has broken. One of these systems—the scientific view which does not concern itself with values—may be regarded as sufficiently well known in its general character. But some account is necessary of the complementary system of values: although that account must be restricted to certain leading features, important for their bearing on the final problem.

The varieties of value are clearly distinguished only in the mature consciousness; and their enumeration must not be mistaken for a psychological account of their genesis, any more than a classification of the

sciences is to be confused with a psychology of cognition. We have to distinguish kinds of value, not different ways in which we become conscious of value, although we may expect difference in the objects to be correlated with a difference in the conscious attitude to them. And values may be discriminated in different ways according to the principle of division adopted. Some of these ways may be described as formal; but one distinction has special regard to content, and with this distinction a beginning may be made.

In the first place, then, values may be distinguished into kinds according to the nature of the objects or ideals to which they have reference or within which they may be included. It is impossible, at the outset, to lay down a principle for determining all the different varieties of value, and the distinctions which we draw may conceal a unity of system which will be disclosed in the course of further analysis. We must start from a preliminary and empirical classification. In this way we may enumerate happiness, beauty, goodness, and truth as comprehensive descriptions under which many particular experiences of value may be brought, and as expressive of ideals to which worth is undoubtedly assigned.

The first of these ideals—happiness—is that which is most commonly in our mouths and appeals most forcibly to the plain man. Almost everyone admits that what contributes to happiness is of value; some are willing to say that this is the very meaning of value. But, when we come to look at the conception happiness more closely, this first view seems to need amendment. A man's happiness may consist in realising or in contemplating beautiful things, or in the pursuit of goodness, or in the search for and attainment of truth, or in the

gratification of some strong passion, such as the love of power, or in the work-a-day life from which reflexion is banished, or in passing from enjoyment to enjoyment. The content of the notion happiness will differ according as it signifies one or other of these things, or some combination of them. And a notion which, like this, may mean anything comes very near to meaning nothing. It becomes a mere form into which any, or almost any, view of the worth of life may be fitted. There is, however, one positive element in the notion happiness, and to this element due regard must be paid. It implies always the simple but positive element pleasure.

Expressions are occasionally to be met with in some writers—Bentham is an example[1]—which seem to imply that the words pleasant and good have the same meaning. But this identification, or apparent identification, of two different ideas is probably due to nothing more than an impatience with any divergence from the doctrine of hedonism. It certainly overlooks a clear distinction. That something is pleasant is a fact of immediate experience—that and nothing more. That this pleasure is good or worthy or has value is a further assertion. This is shown by the fact that it is at least open to dispute whether certain pleasures have value or are in any way good. Malicious pleasure is a case in point. On the one hand it must be held by the hedonist that while malice itself is bad, or has negative value, the malicious man's pleasure in his evil deed is an element of good or positive value in the total experience. On the other hand it is maintained that this

[1] *E.g.*, *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, p. 7 and chap. ii (ed. of 1879).

Pleasure both good and bad
Stands upon same psych. plain

pleasure has in it no element of good at all—that it even makes the total experience worse than it would have been had the malicious act failed to bring pleasure to the agent or had it stirred in him a conscientious pain. It is not necessary to argue the point on its merits. All that is necessary is to make clear that there is no contradiction in holding that the malice which is accompanied by pleasure is worse than the malice which is not, or, in other words, that there are some cases of pleasure which are not in themselves good. Consequently, when the assertion is made that pleasure, or pleasure alone, is of value, the predicate adds something to the subject of the proposition—the meaning is not the same as if one said 'pleasure is pleasant.' The assertion is not a tautology; and, if hedonism is of any significance as an ethical theory, it is because its fundamental proposition that pleasure alone is of value is a synthetic proposition and not merely analytic or verbal.

Hedonism is of course a familiar doctrine both in ordinary life and in philosophy. Its philosophical importance consists largely in its attempt to make ethics a quantitative science by introducing a single standard by which values of all kinds may be measured. It has no difficulty in laying down the principle; but it has never achieved precision, or gained general assent, in its manner of applying it to the details of life. Spiritual goods cannot be measured against material on the same scale. There is not sufficient evidence to show that a society of Socrateses would experience more pleasure than a society of fools—or, at least, than a society of ordinary people who enjoyed material goods and did not trouble themselves or their neighbours by asking

inconvenient questions. The hedonist philosopher has commonly preferred the goods of the mind not because he could prove them to be more pleasant, but because he held them to be more noble. The feeling of pleasure, real and positive as it is, partakes in this connexion of the formality which belongs to the ideal of happiness. It belongs to every kind of value when realised in its fulness, and in some degree belongs to every realisation of value. It may be regarded as a feeling of value, but it is not a measure or standard of value. Although it accompanies all experiences of value, it does not express their distinctive nature or enable us to discriminate their differences. Accordingly, as pleasure does not explain or measure value, it seems better also not to speak of it as an independent kind of value. It attaches itself to value of every kind, instead of being one kind amongst the others.

The remaining kinds of value which have been already enumerated are the æsthetic, the moral, and the intellectual, corresponding to the traditional ideals of the beautiful, the good, and the true.

Among these difficulty arises regarding the inclusion of intellectual value. It is maintained by an active school of thinkers that truth is simply a concise expression for working efficiency, that it is capable of analysis into certain other values, and that all so-called intellectual values have their real value in relation to some other function than intellectual apprehension. On this view, truth, although a value, would not be regarded as one of the fundamental kinds of value. The view appeals for support to the practical interests which determine

the beginnings of knowledge. But it overlooks the independent interest in knowing which characterises the maturity of the human mind. Truth has been found to possess a value which is not capable of being resolved into other and practical interests, and which must therefore be regarded as independent. It is the object and the attainment of intelligence alone and can in this way be distinguished from goodness or beauty. The proper attitude of the intelligence to a true proposition, or to a system of true propositions, is simply belief or assent; and this is an intellectual attitude different from the moral approval of goodness or the artistic admiration of beauty. This difference, however, suggests another question. If we call truth a value, do we not thereby obliterate the distinction with which we started between cognition and appreciation? The answer to this question seems to be that the true proposition, merely as true, is not a value apart from the intelligence which understands and appropriates it. It is knowledge of truth, or truth as known, that has value. Man as a thinking being finds value in the truth which he seeks; it may even become the chief aim of his life, and he cherishes it on its own account—not as something alien to himself, but as completing or perfecting his own intellectual nature.

Moral and æsthetic values are closely connected—so closely that they have sometimes been identified. But even a little reflexion brings out differences that may not be ignored. In the first place there is a subjective distinction. The mental attitude by which we apprehend or detect beauty is not the same as that in which we become aware of goodness. Both, however, differ from the intellectual attitude in knowledge; and

the term appreciation may be used for both kinds of valuation. But this term covers attitudes of mind which are not the same. Our appreciation of a beautiful sunset, for example, differs from our appreciation of a good deed or a good character. The former is admiration simply, the latter approval.

No doubt the attitudes may be combined. Admiration of a work of art is often conveyed in terms which express approbation or approval also. Not only do we speak of a good picture or a good artist, but this phrase may indicate not merely admiration of the work, but approval of it and its author. On the other hand, æsthetic terms are used for moral excellence: the Hebrew praised the 'beauty of holiness'; the Greek conception of *καλοκαγαθία* signified the union of art and morality at their highest point; and, in the modern phrase 'a beautiful soul,' a term of æsthetic admiration is used to express high moral approbation. Even in these phrases, however, what is expressed seems to be the combination of two modes of appreciation rather than their identity. The 'beautiful soul' is an object of æsthetic admiration, but this object is the result of dispositions and activities to which moral approval is appropriate. The moral object—the soul that is in harmony with the moral ideal—is also an object of æsthetic admiration: the good, when fully realised, is in this case seen to be something that is also beautiful in itself. And, when we use terms of moral approval for the æsthetic object, we can perhaps discover that our thoughts have passed from the object as beautiful to another aspect of the situation. We do not speak of a sunset as good instead of beautiful, or, if we do, we recognise that we are not using the word

'good' in its ethical meaning. It is more common to apply the term 'good' to the work of human art and still more common to apply it to the artist; and in these cases, moral approval may be implied; but this moral approval is something superadded to æsthetic admiration and not identical with it. We admire the work without any thought of how it was done or even who did it; but when we approve (in the ethical sense) it is with reference to the conscious activity of the artist who used his skill to realise the ideal which he was able to conceive.

Moreover, instances are also common in which the two attitudes diverge. The same concrete situation may call forth moral approval combined with æsthetic depreciation, or æsthetic admiration combined with moral disapproval. We approve without admiring, or admire and at the same time condemn. The moral character or good deed may be spoiled for our æsthetic sense by awkwardness or lack of grace. Great crimes may call forth our reluctant admiration by the manner in which they are devised and carried out: there was no inconsistency in De Quincey's description of 'murder as a fine art.' Or a whole career, such as that of Napoleon, may appeal to our æsthetic sense although it is condemned by our moral judgment.

In the second place, the distinction between the æsthetic and the moral judgment is confirmed when we examine their respective objects. Any work of fine art, anything we call beautiful, has a certain independence and completeness in itself[1]. To use an illustration

[1] Cp. H. Rickert, *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft*, 2nd ed., p. 75.

of Professor Stewart's, "Hermes is dug up at Olympia, and we find him beautiful as soon as we see him[1]." The dust of centuries has hidden his beauty, but has not changed it. We may know nothing of his origin or history: who the sculptor was, or what his purpose, when the work was completed, or what temple it was meant to adorn. All these are but accessory circumstances of interest to the scholar. Knowledge about them may perhaps add to our admiration; but ignorance of them can do little to impair it; the eye is satisfied with seeing. The artistic object is something aloof and by itself, like the Platonic ideas—"all breathing human passion far above." Contemplation of it lifts us out of the life of action and thinking, and of their values:

> Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
> As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
> When old age shall this generation waste,
> Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
> Than ours, a friend to man.

But Keats mistook its message when he read its lesson as "beauty is truth, truth beauty." This is a confusion of values. Beauty is beauty, and that is enough. Æsthetic contemplation rests upon a certain external and sensuous content, and does not need to go beyond this content either to intellectual meanings or to the context of circumstances in which it was produced. The material object is of itself sufficient to provoke and to justify admiring contemplation: even knowledge of the artist's purpose is unessential; far less is it necessary to enquire into his state of mind and to know what sort of a man he was. The sensuous object, in form and

[1] *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, vol. I, p. 183.

content, is that to which beauty fundamentally belongs; when we speak of beauties of mind and character, we are conscious that we are using æsthetic terminology in a sense which, if perfectly just, is yet derivative rather than fundamental.

It is different with moral appreciation. Even if our primary moral judgments seem to have an external application, a little criticism makes it clear that the external thing has only instrumental goodness and can never have intrinsic goodness. If we speak of a good character, it is clear that the moral approval has respect to the soul and not to the body; even when we speak of a good deed, reflexion convinces us that the mere overt act whereby things in space change their places is not in itself good or evil; its value, if it have any, can be instrumental only: that is to say, it is regarded as a cause of what is good, but not as good in itself. The action to be appreciated as moral must be taken from its inner side. The rescue from drowning—to use a time-honoured illustration—will be approved or disapproved according as the intention was to restore to a life of usefulness or to reserve for future torture. We must always go back to the inner aspect of conduct —the intention; and the intention never stands alone, as something holding for this case only and having no relation to anything else. It is part of a system of conduct. Thus the approval of a single act or incident is a judgment concerned with the inner life, and apt to be concerned with the whole life. We cannot disregard the motive—as we do in the case of the artist—or be indifferent to what sort of a man the agent was. Moral judgments have not the completeness and independence

of æsthetic judgments. From the first, if they do not form a system, they depend upon a system.

These different kinds of value depend upon a difference in the objects valued. Certain formal distinctions remain which call for explanation. The most obvious and important of these distinctions is that between Intrinsic and Instrumental value. A thing may have value or worth in itself quite apart from anything else to which it leads; and this is called intrinsic value. On the other hand, when we call a thing good or say that it has value, we are often aware that we use the term not for what the thing is in itself, but because of something else which follows from it as an effect. Thus a surgical operation may be said to be good, not, certainly, because it has any intrinsic worth in itself and apart from its consequences, but because it may be a means of prolonging life or restoring health: and we assume that life and health are good in themselves or (if they are not) that they causally determine something else which is good in itself. Consequently, where we make use of a proposition which asserts merely instrumental value, value does not, strictly speaking, belong to the subject of the proposition. What we ascribe to that subject is not value but causal efficiency to bring about something else which is assumed or implied to possess value. Assertions of instrumental value, being thus causal propositions, are at the same time utility-propositions: the thing is said to be useful as leading to something else which is of intrinsic value. The weight of any thorough enquiry must therefore fall upon the conception of intrinsic value, and it might seem that the conception of instrumental value could be dis-

missed at once as having to do solely with causal relations. But the case is not so simple; and some further enquiry is necessary into the relation of instrumental to intrinsic value.

The science in which the conception of value has been used with greatest effect is economics; and it may be well to consider for a moment the economic conception of value, for in economics 'value' has a well-defined meaning. The value of any economic good is determined by its relation to other things which can be got in exchange for it; and when we have in money a general measure of the ratio in which things can be exchanged for one another, the measurement of value is easy: a thing's value is its price. The term 'value,' in this sense, is what the economist also calls 'value in exchange'; it is an instrumental value, a means of getting something else; and to this use the term 'value' is generally restricted in economic reasoning. To understand its further significance needs a little examination of the concept. The value of any article *A* consists in its relation to the amounts of other articles (say *B*, *C*, and *D*) or any one or more of them which can be got in exchange for it. The value of *B*, in the same way, will consist in its relation to the amounts of *A*, *C*, and *D*, or any one or more of them, which can be got in exchange for it. Similarly of the values of *C* and *D*. And, if we measure the value of all commodities by money, then money itself has to be valued in terms of these other commodities: for it, after all, is one commodity amongst others. Thus the attempt to define the economic value of any one commodity always lands us, in the long run, in a circle—provided we keep to

this meaning of value as instrumental. The circular nature of the definition is only hidden from us because we commonly define the value in relation to a common measure, money, and overlook for the moment the fact that the value of money itself must be defined in relation to other articles. Hence the economic conception of value (that is, of value in exchange) is found on analysis to depend on commodities having some other value than this—a value which is independent of their relation to other commodities. That is to say, value in exchange rests ultimately upon what Adam Smith called 'value in use,' and what Jevons and others after him have called simply 'utility.' The term 'utility' would not have been retained by economists unless it had been found convenient; but it is no more correct here than in some of its ethical uses. It does not clearly distinguish intrinsic value from value in exchange, because the latter is also a kind of utility; and utility, indeed, should mean usefulness for something, and thus imply that very reference to another thing which, in this place, it is introduced to avoid. Adam Smith's term 'value in use,' though somewhat clumsy, is really more correct than the simpler term 'utility.' The point which it is desired to bring out is that the commodity has a value in itself, which is not dependent on its relation to other things which it produces or which may be got for it. The people who desire it desire it for its own sake—to use, as Adam Smith says, or simply to enjoy. This value is independent of exchange; and when a thing has this value, people are willing to do something or to give up something in order to possess it. The things they do or give up have value in exchange, or instrumental value, and perhaps

that only. But this thing, which has a value independent of exchange, possesses intrinsic value or worth—at least from the point of view of economic science.

The economist has his scale of values, and can adjust all economic goods to their proper places on the scale. But the goods receive their places on the scale not in virtue of their own intrinsic quality, but because of what can be got for them—for what they will bring in money, or according to their relation to some more intricate standard. The economist may recognise intrinsic value as the basis upon which his values rest; but he measures these by an external standard: his whole valuation, therefore, is extrinsic. If we attempt to measure things by their intrinsic worth—if, for instance, we raise the question of the importance of economic goods in life as a whole—we shall have to seek out some way of determining intrinsic values, which will be entirely different from the scale of the economists and which may assign the highest place to goods unrecognised on the economic scale[1].

An attempt to measure intrinsic values would raise questions hard to answer. Are economic goods, for instance, to have a place on this scale? and if so at what point? Or are they all—the whole material apparatus of life, that is to say—to be regarded as having instrumental value only? Merely to state this question is to show that the distinction between intrinsic and instrumental value is not of such easy application as it seemed to be at the first glance. Obviously, the surgical operation has instrumental value only, the medical art is good, but not good in itself—only as a means for restoring health

[1] Cp. 'Ethical Aspects of Economics,' *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. xvii (1907), pp. 1 ff., 317 ff., 437 ff.

or preserving life. But what of health, or long life? Are these good in themselves, or only as means to happiness, or social efficiency, or some other end? The mere statement of these questions is suggestive of controversy.

And a further consideration has also to be taken into account. For a little experience shows us that the same thing may be both an end-in-itself and also a means to something else that has value. Knowledge, for instance, may be good in itself, that is, have intrinsic value; and knowledge may lead to sympathy, and so have instrumental value also. And sympathy may have intrinsic value; but it may also react upon and stimulate knowledge, as well as affect other persons by deeds of beneficence, and thus have at the same time instrumental value. The category of means and end, under which we are striving to understand value, does not give us a single clear line of advance. Just as, in nature, we do not find one thing which is simply cause, and another thing which is simply effect, but interaction is the rule, so here, means and end are interwoven in the complex fabric of life.

The category of means and end is indeed an imperfect guide for identifying and discriminating values. It is a useful and necessary distinction for our thinking; but life overruns it, and sometimes obliterates it in its continuous process. Where do the means end, and where does the end begin? Is it winning only that is the end of the game? or is the game its own end which victory crowns with an added worth? The means, it may be said, may in such a case have an intrinsic value of their own in addition to their instrumental value as leading to the end, and the total value of the whole experience will be the sum of the intrinsic values of

means and of end. But this does not state the truth fully; the total value cannot be arrived at by mere addition[1]. It may even be that, in certain experiences, neither the means alone nor the end alone has any intrinsic value. Is it not often the case that you would not play the game at all—that it would have no value for you—unless you had a chance of winning? and, on the other hand, that you would not value victory at all except as the result of the game? What we hold as good may be the end reached in this particular way or by these means. Means and end shade into one another in experience, and no value at all may belong to one of them apart from the other. Or it may be that each has some value in itself, but that the value of the whole realised experience is greater than the sum of the values which would belong to its parts if taken separately.

Ethical analysis does not stop at the same point as psychological analysis or physical division stops. Generally it stops much earlier. We may proceed with our psychological analysis far beyond the point at which value has disappeared from the factors into which the experience is analysed. The simplest things to which it is possible to assign value may be very complex things in their actual existence; and the whole of which we can be sure that its full intrinsic value is there to be seen, if we have insight to see it, may be a very comprehensive whole indeed.

It is customary to draw a distinction between Permanent and Transient values. All mental states may be viewed in respect of their duration; they last for a longer

[1] Cp. G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p. 28.

or shorter time, and the time admits of exact measurement. Duration has thus a prominent place among the circumstances by which Bentham sought to measure the value of a lot of pleasure or pain[1], and thereby to transform ethics into a quantitative science. It was in the attempted measurement of intensity that the chief pitfalls for him lay; with duration he seemed to have no difficulty. Taking a second or other short interval as the unit of his reckoning, he estimated the value of a continuous experience by multiplying its intensity into the number of seconds which it lasted. Even this measurement, however, proceeded upon an assumption —the assumption that the pleasure or pain which was regarded as a continuous experience was of identical intensity throughout its duration; and this assumption is not justified by the facts. Thus even in the measurement of duration the hedonic calculus is in difficulties, not because we cannot count time, but because we may not assume that the experience which endures remains of constant intensity. This difficulty may be circumvented by estimating degrees of permanence in another way. Instead of looking to the immediate conscious experience, which varies from moment to moment, we may measure the permanence of the objects to which we attribute value, or of the mental dispositions or interests which are the conditions of our enjoyment of these objects. The later utilitarians commonly followed this course, and Bentham did not ignore its applications. For them, as for Bentham, value ultimately lay only in the immediate experience, which is in constant flux; but they recommended their disciples to turn their eyes

[1] *Principles of Morals and Legislation* (ed. of 1879), p. 29.

away from it and seek rather the possession of the objects, and the cultivation of the interests, from which pleasure normally followed. Although pleasures were transient, they had sources which were comparatively permanent and which might give stability to human values.

The attitude recommended by the utilitarians is not necessarily restricted to the hedonic interpretation of value. The attainment of value is always determined by objects, whether material things or other factors in the environment; it is also conditioned by the dispositions and interests of the persons in whom the value is realised. And in both these respects there may be varying degrees of permanence. As regards the objective conditions, it has been customary for the proverbial philosopher to depreciate material things—all that is commonly called wealth—as transient and the prey of moth and rust; our hold on them is without doubt uncertain, and the enjoyment which they yield is apt to diminish with years. On the other hand social objects, such as "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," are held to be more lasting, although they too cannot be affirmed to be permanent, even when the person is worthy of them. It is obvious that, as long as we are dealing with temporal objects, we cannot assert anything more than relative permanence. Only ideal objects, conceived as independent of time, can be called permanent in the strict sense. Such are the 'eternal values' of truth, beauty, and goodness; such also is the love of God.

It may seem easier to draw the distinction from the side of personal dispositions than from that of their objects; but here also there are divergent estimates. There is an old controversy between the sensualist and

the philosopher as to whose pleasures are the greater, and this controversy has been looked upon as settled only because the philosopher has been allowed to give literary expression to the debate and has summed up in his own favour. As he puts the case, he alone has experience of the pleasures of knowledge as well as of those of sense, and as he prefers the former his judgment must be accepted without appeal. Perhaps he has not summed up quite fairly; and the sensualist, had he been given a hearing, might have urged that the philosopher had not the requisite sensibility for appreciating sensual pleasures at their full value, and that, as susceptibilities differ, each party should be left the judge of what he likes best. There is no good reply to this rejoinder, so far as regards the intensity of human feelings. But on the question of permanence, the philosopher does seem to stand on firmer ground. Sensual susceptibilities, however carefully nourished, change and wither as the organic life passes youth and maturity; there is far less diminution of the susceptibility to the values commonly called higher—those of art and letters, of science and of the affections. From the standpoint even of the individual life, they have a degree of permanence which is not shared by the values which the sensualist esteems most highly.

It follows that there is a certain superiority in this respect of one kind of values over another. A value wears better the more it is independent of material conditions; the higher values of knowledge, art, and morality are more permanent than those of the sensual life. The distinction remains a relative distinction, due to the greater permanence of the interests to which certain values appeal. And if, as will be argued later,

all values belong to the personal life, their permanence must depend upon its permanence. This will hold even of the 'eternal values' of truth, beauty, and goodness. Indeed the phrase 'eternal values' is liable to be misunderstood. It seems used so as to signify independence of time and therefore of any conscious life which, like the human, is in time. In this sense we might predicate eternity of truth (except in so far as truth is conceived as the possession of an intelligence which functions in time), or of beauty (if we regard beauty as independent of conscious apprehension), but hardly of moral goodness (which involves a state of conscious will). But, although truth and beauty, as thus restricted, are elements in or contributory to value, we do not seem justified in calling them values apart from their realisation in or through conscious life. They are not values till realised, and as realised they can be eternal only if, and in the same sense as, persons are eternal.

There is a further distinction between values which is due to what Bentham calls their 'extent.' It relates to the number of persons who may participate in their enjoyment. To this distinction we may give the name of Catholic and Exclusive. By catholic values (as the term is used here) I mean those in which all men may participate, or those whose enjoyment by one man does not limit or interfere with their equal enjoyment by others. When one man can enjoy a good only by its loss to other men, or by restricting their equal chances of enjoyment, then the value may be called exclusive. The great classes of value which have been mentioned —intellectual, moral, æsthetic, and emotional—have

nothing in their own nature which makes them exclusive. When one man attains truth, or admires beauty, or realises goodness, or even enjoys happiness, there is nothing in his experience which makes it impossible or more difficult for others to do the same. Truth may be passed from mind to mind; beauty does not wane by being admired; goodness is infectious; even happiness radiates from the presence of the happy man, if only outward circumstances do not impose a bar. But if men regard outward or material circumstances as themselves possessed of intrinsic value, then such values, or many of them, are exclusive. The full enjoyment of material goods commonly requires their monopoly. This is most obvious in the case of primary needs—food and clothing and shelter. But it holds of material goods generally that their supply is limited, while desire is boundless. And the industrial civilisation in the midst of which we live has as yet done little to reduce or to counteract the conflict of interests which lies at its base.

If we admit that material goods have instrumental value only, a further consideration enters. Intrinsic goods have varying degrees of connexion with or dependence upon the material apparatus that may be instrumental towards them. The closer this connexion is, the greater this dependence, the more difficult will it be for such goods to be realised by many persons, and the greater will be the antagonism between the interests of one man and the interests of another. On the other hand, the less its dependence on material instruments, the more catholic is any value. It is thus interesting to compare the different degrees of this dependence in the different classes of value.

Happiness has an obvious connexion with such ex-

ternal instruments, though it is not easy to state the connexion in a way free from objection. Wealth and, in general, the control of the material environment are so constant an object of desire that men are apt to forget that happiness consists in a state of mind and not in the possession of material goods. But it is not altogether independent of these possessions. Nor is there any common standard for determining what that competent measure of external goods is which, in Aristotle's view[1], is necessary to happiness: nor, indeed, any ground for assuming that the competent measure is the same for all men. Nor can any general agreement be found amongst the long line of reflective writers who have given their opinions on this subject to the world. On the one hand it has been common to emphasise the inward nature of happiness and to minimise its dependence on anything outside a man's own mind. Thus we find Adam Smith depreciating power and riches as "enormous and operose machines," which "keep off the summer shower not the winter storm," and asserting that "in ease of body and peace of mind all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level, and the beggar who suns himself by the side of the highway possesses that security which kings are fighting for[2]." On the other hand a shrewd observer has roundly asserted that threefourths of a man's

[1] *Ethics*, book I, chap. X, p. 1101 a 15.

[2] *Moral Sentiments*, part IV, chap. i. The words of the author of *The Wealth of Nations* may be compared with the similar though less confident opinion of the modern economist whose study of poverty has become classical: "I perhaps build too much on my slight experience, but I see nothing improbable in the general view that the simple, natural lives of the working-people tend to their own and their children's happiness more than the artificial, complicated existence of the rich."—*Charles Booth: a Memoir* (1918), p. 105.

happiness depend upon his yearly income[1]. And this, put more graphically and with insight into the fact that it is not only income, but being within your income, that matters, was the simple philosophy of Mr Micawber: "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery." In truth, the conception happiness conveys so little regarding its content or conditions that the controversy hardly admits of a more definite decision than this: that so far as a man's happiness depends on external circumstances it will frequently tend to come into competition with the similar happiness of other men.

This is the general rule; and it applies to other values as well. Knowledge is the same for all, and there is nothing in the nature of truth to make it the property of one man rather than another: except this, that, before it can be attained, it may require a concentration of mind and a culture of the intellect which are only possible to those who have not only a fit endowment of mental faculty but also some amount of freedom from the ordinary cares of life and leisure to devote themselves to intellectual pursuits. And civilisation has not yet managed to produce a society in which this leisure is open to all. Those who have it are in a position of privilege to which only a limited number can attain.

Much the same must be said of the æsthetic values. It is true that in itself beauty is as little envious as any good. It is not made less beautiful by being shared. But it is rarer than we could wish, and to enjoy it the

[1] I cannot trace the reference, but my recollection is that the assertion occurs in one of Prof. Bain's works.

intervention of material instruments is often necessary. Many of the beauties of nature, most of the beauties of art, are as much hidden from the mass of men as are the intellectual delights of the mathematician. They need opportunities for their inspection and culture for their appreciation. They are thus, like the intellectual values, limited by external conditions which the social order has not been able to put within the power of all but reserves for those who are favoured by economic circumstances.

Moral values are not limited in this way. It is, of course, true that every kind of moral activity is not open to every one, and that circumstances call for different modes of conduct. The particular good deed of one man may make it impossible or unnecessary for another man to perform the same good deed; but it never puts goodness out of his power, it never interferes with his volition to do the best. Whatever the circumstances there is always a right to be done, a moral value to be realised. The attainment of moral value by one man may act as a stimulus in the same direction upon other men, just as his cultivation of truth or beauty may. But in the latter cases the stimulus may lead to impotent desire—for the instruments of study or of art may be wanting. In morality, on the other hand, there is no such monopoly of means, for the moral law is realised by the will alone, and through the will it is manifested in character. Riches and poverty, health and sickness, power and subjection are merely different conditions in which goodness can be cultivated and moral values brought into existence. This universality of the moral value vindicates its rank as the most catholic among the varieties of value.

Yet another ground of distinction may be mentioned. Values may be divided into higher and lower according to the degree of their importance; and within the higher class we may speak of dominant values.

E. Taylor.

This distinction concerns intrinsic values only. It is clear that instrumental values must be measured by the intrinsic values to which they lead and by their effectiveness in leading to them. But, as soon as the question is put regarding the relative importance of intrinsic values, the difficulties that lie in the way of any solution are apparent. If intellectual values are under consideration, are we to prefer mathematics to biology, economics to metaphysics, or the reverse? If the question is æsthetic, can we say which art is the highest and by how much? Or, in morality, can we distinguish kinds of goodness and arrange them in the order of their value (as Reid attempted to arrange the virtues, or as Martineau classified springs of action according to the degree of their moral worth)? And if happiness be the aim, is it the happiness that depends on the life of sense that comes highest, or that derived from science, or from art, or from good works? Thus we raise old difficulties over again. Can we even arrange, in any order of merit, the fundamental classes of value—intellectual, artistic, and moral? These questions appear unanswerable, and we are tempted to put them aside, and to say that value is value, and there is an end of the matter—that it has no degrees. But if we do take this line, we are confronted with the fact that we are constantly compelled, whether on good grounds or on bad, to make some preference of the kind described—to select one value rather than another when the attainment of both is impossible but a choice between them is open to us.

There are two ways in which the comparative valuation of values may be attempted. One of these is empirical and quantitative. It starts from the assumption that each valuable object has a definite quantity of something which we must just call value and which is always the same in kind, so that all values can be measured by the quantity of it which they contain, and so receive a definite position on the one scale of values. This done, the whole difficulty vanishes; this said (it seems to be thought), all theoretical difficulties disappear and only practical difficulties remain. The issue is not so plain as this, however. A scale of values of this kind has been worked out on one hypothesis only—the hypothesis that, in the last analysis, positive value belongs to pleasure only and negative value belongs to pain only. I cannot in this place examine once more the famous hedonic calculus, and must content myself with assuming that it has been unable to justify itself at the bar of criticism. Other suggestions for a quantitative estimate and single scale of values have still to answer the question as to the nature of the ultimate something called value which in some instances appears as sensuous, in others as intellectual, in others as moral, in others as artistic, and so on, but which is supposed to maintain an identical nature under these different forms.

If we are to compare values at all, it appears to me that we must give up the idea of a scale for that of a system. We shall never get what we want by adding and subtracting quantities. Even if a quantitative process of this sort enters into the estimate, it will only be in the same way as mechanical interactions enter into vital, mental, and social processes. It will not give us the clue. The

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clue will have to be sought in the idea of a system to which the values belong. Now the subject of values—that is, the conscious person—when he tries to rationalise his life, does attempt also to systematise his values: partly deliberately, partly unconsciously, he gradually forms a dominating conception which determines his conduct and his view of what is of greatest worth. Under this dominant conception, he will arrange other conceptions contributory to value in his life, and will negative suggestions which interfere with that value. To take an old example: gratitude will be approved as a dispositional attitude; but some particular instance of gratitude may be inconsistent with the whole system of social order, so that this particular act of gratitude (say, perjury for a benefactor's sake) ought not to be done. Throughout we are concerned not so much with a total worth to be got by adding particulars, as with the worth of a totality.

We are familiar with many dominant conceptions of value which appeal to the judgments of different men. The voluptuary, the artist, the moralist, the sage, the saint, has each his own dominant conception of value. A complete theory of value should be able to determine the relative validity of these conceptions; and this would involve two things. In the first place it would be necessary to make clear the universal conditions of value which are valid irrespective of the time place and circumstances of the persons in and by whom value is to be realised. In the second place these general principles should be shown to be consistent with, and to make possible, different types of value corresponding to differences of endowment and opportunity. There is one dominant value for the artist's life, another for the

statesman's, another for the philosopher's. Each pursues his own line of life, and his standard differs from the standards of the others. And yet, behind their difference of thought and of achievement, there may be an identity of principle. There is diversity of gifts, but each gift is the earnest of a realised ideal; there is diversity of ideals, but each ideal is worthy; "wisdom is justified of all her children." All men, in their various ways, may be guided by the same principle, each seeking to make his life perfect by the highest performance in his power. To determine the way in which different ideals are related to one another in a community of lives that seek the highest value is not an initial problem. Rather is it the crowning work of an ethical theory. Yet, short of this, we shall not be able to give a satisfactory solution of the problem of the scale of values. For that problem has been resolved into another—the problem of the organic unity or systematic whole into which all values enter, and by their relation to which the place and degree of all partial values are determined.

# III

## THE MEANING OF VALUE

At this point it is necessary to pause and consider an objection that may be taken to the line of argument upon which we are entering. We have discriminated the moral judgment and other judgments of value from the positive judgments about matters of fact and relations on which science is based, but have we any right to regard the two classes of judgment as of equal and objective validity? May it not be the case that the factor called worth is derived entirely from a subjective source —from the element of feeling or of desire which accompanies our judgment? And, if this is so, are not the whole of our value-judgments, and in particular moral judgments, without objective validity? Are they not simply an expression of feelings of pleasure or pain, or perhaps of movements of desire, on the part of the person who makes the judgment? and is their true implication anything more than this—'I am pleased,' or 'I desire'? The objection indicated in these questions takes the form of offering a psychological explanation of the moral consciousness, and generally of the consciousness of value; and this psychological explanation is then held to determine the significance of the consciousness.

The psychological explanation, it will be noticed, takes one or other of two forms. Sometimes it is the feeling of pleasure, at other times it is the experience

of desire, that is appealed to. The two methods may be reconciled by those who hold that desire is always directed to something pleasant as pleasant. But this latter doctrine must not be assumed, nor has it been uniformly held either by those who reduce the moral consciousness to pleasure-pain or by those who reduce it to desire. And both these views have been frequently held. The former has its most famous representative in Hume who defined virtue (or goodness) as "whatever mental action or quality gives to a spectator the pleasing sentiment of approbation[1]"; amongst contemporaries the same doctrine was maintained by Meinong in his early work on the value-judgment[2]. On the other hand, a century before Hume, we have both Hobbes[3] and Spinoza[4] asserting that good is just a name which a man gives to whatever is the object of his desire; and, at the present day, a similar explanation is given by v. Ehrenfels[5] in his treatise on the theory of value, as well as by many other writers.

A full discussion of these views would require a long psychological enquiry, and my purpose is not psychological. Nothing further can be attempted here than to fix attention on one or two salient points specially connected with the ethical implications of the psycho-

[1] *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, app. i, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 289; *Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 261.

[2] *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie* (1894), p. 73. This passage, he said afterwards ('Ueber Werthaltung und Wert,' *Archiv für systematische Philosophie*, vol. I (1895), p. 328), "was intended to imply that an object has greater value for me according as the consciousness of its existence excites in me a more lively feeling of pleasure"—a view which he finds on reflexion to disagree with the facts of experience.

[3] *Leviathan*, part I, chap. vi, p. 24.

[4] *Ethica*, iii, 9 schol.

[5] *System der Werttheorie* (1897), vol. I, p. 2.

logical explanations. If we say that the approval of goodness is simply one kind of pleasure, and that both its force and its validity depend on the degree of that pleasure, then our assertion will have a very immediate and radical bearing on ethics. The same will be the case if we assert that good is just the name we give to an object of desire, and that goodness must therefore be measured by the strength of the desire. These assertions would undoubtedly lead to a fundamental modification, or rather to a complete reversal, of ethical values. And, if any writers make them, it will not be unreasonable to say of them, as Hume said of the controversialists who denied the reality of moral distinctions, that they "may be ranked among the disingenuous disputants[1]." For such assertions would overlook the elementary facts which we have to explain. Even if the primary basis on which moral apprehension depends is a feeling of pleasure, it is discriminated from other feelings of pleasure. Stolen fruits may be sweet and pleasant in their sweetness; but the pleasure got from them is not a moral pleasure; the moral fact enters only when the stolen fruit, though sweet and pleasant to the taste, is also a source of conscientious pain; and it is this moral pain that needs explanation. In the same way all that we desire may be called good by us; but the moral judgment is a discrimination between good and bad desires, and it is this discrimination which we have to account for. It is only a special kind of pleasures, therefore, or pleasures got from some special source, that can be identified with moral approval. On the other view, it is only certain

[1] *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, sect. i, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 169; *Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 169.

desires, or desires for certain classes of objects, that can correctly be called good.

Both views of the moral consciousness to which I am referring—both the view which explains it by reference to pleasure and that which explains it by reference to desire—must recognise and, in general, do recognise the fact that calls for explanation. In all moral experience there is something which cannot be simply identified with pleasure or with desire, but contains a differentiating factor which makes it moral and not merely pleasant or desired. This recognised, the purpose of the psychological moralists is perfectly legitimate. The moral consciousness is a comparatively late expression, if not of human life, yet of life generally; it appears subsequently to pleasure and subsequently to the active or impulsive consciousness. It is legitimate to try to get at an historical understanding of it by connecting it causally with one or other or both of these antecedent and more primitive experiences. Accordingly, the proper purpose of both views is to discover and trace a line of causal connexion; their success in this attempt is a strictly psychological question; the bearing of their results upon the significance of the moral consciousness is a further question. It is this further question that interests us; but, perhaps unfortunately, it cannot be understood properly without reference to the method of procedure adopted for the solution of the psychological problem; and as two different methods for this solution have issued in the objection that has given us pause, it will be necessary to take notice of both these methods.

Let us take first the mode of explanation which

depends upon the pleasure-pain factor in experience. Moral approbation, according to Hume, is a "pleasing sentiment." But not every pleasing sentiment has the function or nature of moral approbation. The divergence between pleasant feeling and moral approval is indeed so marked that pleasure is often regarded with suspicion by the moralist, and, in matters of moral decision which require delicate discrimination, we must lend ear to Aristotle's advice[1] to beware of the side that leans towards pleasure. Moral approbation, therefore, must be a certain kind of pleasing sentiment, or pleasing sentiment derived from a certain source. And this is recognised by Hume. According to him and many others sympathy is the source of this special sentiment. That is to say, not any pleasing sentiment is equivalent to moral approbation, but only the pleasing sentiment due to sympathy. Or rather (since even this is too wide), the pleasing sentiment of sympathy, when sympathy is defined and limited in certain ways which, for present purposes, do not need to be more particularly characterised. Sympathy was taken by Hume[2] to be a sentiment which "nature has made universal in the whole species," and which did not admit of further derivation. Both later and earlier psychological moralists have parted company with him at this point, and held that we can trace the genesis of the feeling of sympathy by means of the working of mental association. If this latter view be adopted, we shall have to postulate only

[1] *Ethics*, book II, chap. ix, p. 1109 b 8.

[2] *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, sect. i and app. i, ed. Selby-Bigge, pp. 173, 286; *Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, pp. 172, 259.

the more simple and immediate pleasures such as those of the senses, and we shall then be able to trace the way in which, by the working of the ordinary laws of association, pleasure comes to be connected with our representation of the states of mind of others, and sympathy as a 'pleasing sentiment' arises. I do not propose to examine the correctness of this psychological derivation. But it may be said, in passing, that Hume and Adam Smith showed a true instinct for essentials in laying great stress on sympathy—the emotional side of the social factor—in morality, though I think that they erred in laying exclusive stress upon it.

Let us assume then the correctness of the historical account of the genesis of this pleasing sentiment of moral approbation. We must now ask the question, What is the validity of this moral approbation or approval? How are we to measure or otherwise appraise it? Must we do so simply by going back to its origin? If so, then we must remember that its origin (according to the more radical psychologists) is simply pleasure, indeed, sensuous pleasure. And, if we are presented with an experience in which (as we may put it) sensuous pleasure points one way and the pleasure of moral approbation the other way, then all we can do is to compare the two pleasures as pleasures, and the only reasonable course would seem to be to give the preference to the stronger or greater, for we have taken away any other standard. If this solution were adopted, moral judgment would not merely be transformed, it would disappear. But this is not the solution adopted by the psychological moralists to whom I have referred. Explicitly or tacitly they give a preference to the pleasing sentiment of

approbation, even although the simultaneous and competing source of pleasure which points in a different direction may be very much stronger. The preference, accordingly, is not due to the intensity of the pleasure accompanying approval (for Hutcheson's view[1] that the pleasures of the moral sense are the greatest pleasures we have may be set aside as inconsistent with facts); it must therefore be due to its source—in this case, sympathy as against egoistic feeling. That is to say, we are assigning validity to, or rather assuming the validity of, the social factor which enters into our moral consciousness, when it is opposed by selfish pleasure or interests. If so, the attempt to trace the historical genesis of that factor has had no effect upon its significance for life or upon the validity of our moral judgment. Historically, we suppose that we have traced social feeling back to its origin in egoistic feeling; but, in our ethical estimate, we do not express the value of the one in terms of the value of the other.

Perhaps Herbert Spencer may have had this point in view when he placed origin and value in inverse relation to one another by asserting that "the more complex motives and the more involved thoughts have all along been of higher authority" than the primitive and relatively simple tendencies[2]. His view is certainly nearer the truth than the opposite preference of the primitive to the developed; but it assumes too easily that value increases at each step in evolution, and it makes too prominent certain formal characteristics of

[1] *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (1728), p. xix.

[2] H. Spencer, *Principles of Ethics*, vol. 1, p. 106.

the evolutionary process. When the conception of temporal advance in the evolutionary process is confused or identified with the conception good or better—as often happens in Spencer—this error is serious. It makes time the test of goodness, and thus (though taking an opposite direction) falls into the same mistake as the view which tries to discover value by tracing psychological genesis. The latter view seeks to explain value by priority in time; Spencer's doctrine identifies it with the later moments of time. Both overlook the truth that mere time contains no element of value, and that the relation of value to the time-process is a question for investigation not for assumption.

When we turn to the view that the appreciation of moral value is a product of desire—that we approve what we desire—the argument must follow similar lines, although this view perhaps goes deeper than the other. According to the former view we approve what pleases us, or the approval is the same thing as the pleasure; according to this view we approve what we desire: approval does not bring desire after it, but on the contrary, desire determines approval or is the same thing as approval. This theory lays stress on the active process of life as the fundamental factor in man's consciousness; and in this it is distinguished from the preceding theory which emphasises the passive feeling of pleasure. But the two theories are alike in trying to explain moral approval by resolving it into something else; and their methods in large measure correspond. Just as we saw that, if to approve means simply to be pleased, moral distinctions will disappear

or be transformed, because morality requires discrimination between things that please, so if good means simply what we desire, then, equally, the concept becomes otiose or must change its meaning: the problem is not touched regarding the approval of one desire (not always the strongest desire) and the disapproval of others.

But those thinkers who derive approval from desire seldom rest in this conclusion. They attempt to discriminate between desires, and to make a psychological account of the development and systematisation of desires serve the purpose of this discrimination. From this discrimination, in some way or other, the moral approval of one desire and the moral disapproval of another come into being. Here again the psychological problem is legitimate; and there can be no question that the moral approval which discriminates between desires is a later product in consciousness than desire itself. We may say that desire is antecedent, morality consequent. But it does not follow that the moral factor can be accounted for by the factor of desire; still less does it follow that the latter is the measure of the significance or validity of the former.

There are factors in the inherited constitution, factors of the nature of instinct, which predetermine the strength and order of the impulses before the appearance of the ideal factor which transforms impulse into desire. A certain though limited measure of order is thus to be expected in the life of desire even independently of morality; the desires tend to be directed to certain objects or classes of objects, and they vary in strength. Reflecting upon them we may group them

in certain ways. We may distinguish, for instance, transient desires for objects from those which are connected with the permanent needs of life, and among the latter we may distinguish those which are mainly egoistic in their interest from those whose interest is mainly racial or social. But how are we to assess their relative values? The strength of the desire cannot supply the place of a standard; for, indeed, strength and value are often opposed: the sensuous interest overpowers the spiritual, the immediate the permanent, the selfish the social. The utility of moral ideas (if the phrase may be allowed) consists in this, that they introduce a new standard, a standard of value, by which the standard of strength may be regulated and controlled. They give a preference, as we may put it, to certain desires over others: to the permanent over the transient, to the social over the selfish, to the spiritual over the sensual. The grounds of this preference are not got out of the mere fact of desire as a conscious active tendency varying in strength. If we say they are to be got out of the different objects to which the desires are directed, then we assign higher value to one object than to another, and our moral judgment consists in thus assigning value to the different objects of desire. It is not got out of the desires themselves, but is an appreciation of desire founded upon objective discrimination.

As in the case of pleasure, so in the case of desire, tracing its genesis and development does not determine its validity. This determination, it may be added, becomes prominent in consciousness only by gradual stages; and it is only because every stage in the pro-

cess of growth is small that it has been possible for some moral psychologists to overlook each small advance and to imagine that the whole facts of the mature moral consciousness can be accounted for by their origin. The limits of this method are made clear when we put the question, Why do we assign validity to our moral approval and to moral ideas generally? To this question the history of their genesis gives no answer.

The method of psychological enquiry is misconceived and its results are misinterpreted when these are allowed to take the place of an independent investigation of value. The experience and judgment of value are undoubtedly mental facts, and psychology may trace their rise and history; but it does not touch the question of their validity, any more than the validity of mathematical judgments is affected by the history of their formation.

II

Moral ideas as Social "Custom morality"

Another consideration, however, of a different kind is sometimes regarded as putting ethical enquiry in the strict sense out of court, or as being itself the proper substitute for ancient methods of ethics. This consideration is derived not from the psychical history of moral judgments but from their social conditions. The moral consciousness, it is held, is simply a reflexion of the social order, or at least in origin it was so: and its peculiarities are due to its origin. From this view also there may be derived an objection at the threshold to the validity of the judgment of value, though it is an objection of another kind than the preceding. It does not resolve value or approval into psychical elements of a different and better known order, but it

traces them to the influence on consciousness of the social environment which controls and directs the individual. Value-judgments, it is held, are only an expression of what happens or of what is required socially.

The facts upon which this view depends are connected with the varying moral codes which distinguish different times and circumstances and different races, and they offer an explanation of this variety. Within a given community there is much greater uniformity of moral opinion than there is between one community and another; and the nearer we go back to primitive and simple forms of social organisation, the greater is the degree of moral uniformity within them, and often, at the same time, the more striking are the moral differences between one community and another. Each community has its customary code, and the custom of the early tribe contains everything which we now distinguish as law, morality, and custom. There is no law and no morality beyond the custom of the tribe; its members have no private consciences or independent rules of right, and nonconformity is unknown or promptly suppressed. The custom of the tribe is, accordingly, the earliest rule of right, the original moral code; the members of the tribe feel bound to conform to this custom: if they did not conform, their tribal and therewith their individual existence would be imperilled, and they would cease to count as factors in the tribal consciousness. The judgment of approval or disapproval, which distinguishes the modern conscience, is a slow development from this implicit acknowledgement of the authority of the tribe.

In regard to this question a distinction has to be

drawn similar to the distinction already drawn regarding the inferences which have been made from the psychological analysis of the moral judgment. We have to ask the question, what general conclusions are established with greater or less probability regarding the social nature of the moral judgment, and then we have to apply the answer to the very different question of the significance of that judgment. Now it has been established, with a fair degree of probability, as a universal characteristic of human society, that groups of men everywhere are in the way of distinguishing between right and wrong, and that, in early societies, the things they call right are identical with the customary actions of the community, the things they call wrong being in conflict with these customary actions. That is to say, the content of morality, for men at the early or tribal stage of development, is identical with the content of tribal custom. But there remains an important difference which may be described as a difference of form. The custom of acting in a given way, which is displayed by members of the tribe generally, is one thing, and not the same thing as the recognition on the part of any individual that that way of acting is a rule binding upon himself. Customary action is performed by the individual even when impulse or desire points in another direction; and this performance is possible only because the custom of the tribe is recognised as a rule binding upon him. This is the beginning of the consciousness of moral obligation. The obligation belongs in the first instance only to the content of custom; but it has potential application of a wider kind. If it had not, moral progress would have been impossible; there

would never have been any morality distinct from custom. It is because men have looked upon custom as binding that they can proceed to criticise it and come to think of a different standard for morality. The theory that morality consists in nothing more than conforming to the social order, or maintaining the social equilibrium, or promoting social vitality, receives no support from the historical view that, for the conscience of the early or savage tribesman, morality and social custom had the same content.

It is, moreover, surprising to find the theory that reduces morality to sociality combined, as it often is, with a practical protest against the conventional morality of the ordinary man of the present day. For conventional morality simply means the morality of ordinary opinion, which is in close accordance with prevailing practice. The morality of primitive man was strictly conventional; the morality of civilised men is often conventional in a less strict sense (there being always some recognition of the difference between opinion and practice); and conventional morality may be used as a term of reproach just because the moral opinion of men is no longer restricted to opinions that are exclusively social in their origin. But the form of morality which is most purely conventional is that in which it is merely social; in objecting to any moral doctrine on the ground that it is conventional, the objector admits by implication that the social basis of morality is inadequate and that it stands in need of reflective criticism.

Morality is not something that has descended out of heaven in perfect and final form. Like everything else that exists it is a development, the successive stages

of which admit of being traced historically. By morality we mean the conduct character and ideas of men in their relation to goodness; and these have grown in precision and in system with the growth of the human mind and the changes of its environment. If a man or a race of men have thought that something is good, then it is a truth—an eternal truth—that they so thought; but it is not therefore an eternal truth, or true at all, that the thing they thought good was good either then or at any time—only that it seemed so to them. The same holds of other values. Men have thought certain things beautiful; and that they so admired them or held them as beautiful is true, though their appreciation may have been defective, and it does not follow that what they admired as beautiful was really beautiful. At each stage of historical development, the meaning of the moral judgment is 'this is good,' and the meaning of the æsthetic judgment is 'this is beautiful.' This meaning may, indeed, be mistaken or erroneous in any given case. But the assumption of the value-judgment is always that there is a value which may be predicated of this or the other situation. And the significance of the historical evolution of moral opinion depends on this assumption. Were the assumption invalid then the proposition 'this is good' could never be either true or false. It would only express some peculiar state of mind of the person making the assertion and would have no possible validity in itself —would be, indeed, simply an emotion put by mistake into the form of a proposition[1].

[1] As Westermarck thinks, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. I, p. 17.

As a fact of the mental life, the moral idea makes its appearance in the midst of emotional and impulsive experiences; but it is not itself either a feeling or a striving. Rather it is a selective principle which functions as a guide to striving and which may determine as well as be determined by feeling. Feeling and striving are indeed anterior to moral ideas and moral judgment; and the moral order in the mind of man, being later in time, may be described as having arisen out of mental phenomena which were as yet non-moral. In exactly the same way there were sensation-factors in consciousness before there were any judgments of perception—anything that can be called knowledge; and, as sensation is in this way prior to knowledge, it is possible to hold with the empirical philosophers that knowledge arises out of, or even is derived from, sensation. The mode of transition from sensation to judgment is a problem for the psychologist; but, whatever solution may be found for this problem, the fact remains that, once we have a judgment, we have before us a question which concerns not the sensations of a subject but the nature of an object. Similarly, whatever be the mode of transition from feeling and striving to the moral judgment, once the transition is made we are no longer concerned with subjective emotions but with the validity of the assertion that this or that is good.

Morality begins with judgments about good and evil, right and wrong, and not simply with emotions—retributive, parental, sympathetic, or what not. Always there are moral judgments as well as moral emotions wherever men are found. What lies behind or before these judgments is matter of speculative, though per-

fectly legitimate, hypothesis only. The moral judgment is, in this respect, on the same level as the positive judgment of experience. We may enquire into the psychological antecedents of the process of judging. But if we may assume that judgments are either true or false—and this assumption is necessary in all scientific enquiry—then the antecedents of the moral judgment do not invalidate its claim to truth any more than the antecedents of judgments of experience invalidate the same claim on their part.

Reflexions of the same kind apply to the assertion of the social origin of morality. Habits and a certain order in social conduct are anterior to the moral order, as may be seen from the behaviour and grouping of animals; and the moral order which expresses moral ideas, being later in the time of its appearance, may be described as having arisen out of a non-moral and merely biological order. But it does not follow from this that the moral order is merely a more complex stage of the biological; for it expresses ideas which are foreign to the latter. Morality is related to society much in the same way as science is. If morality is a social product so also is science; and this feature does not affect the validity of the one any more than it affects the validity of the other. The grounds for the assertion are the same in the two cases. When we say that morality is a social product we mean, first and chiefly, that the individual mind left to itself would not have risen to the conception of moral good and evil. But the reason of this limitation does not lie in anything peculiar to the content of good and evil. It is not simply because good and evil are social factors that the limitation holds true.

Even if we abstracted altogether from the social content of morality something would remain; something does remain for the ordinary moral consciousness in the relative values of different personal desires or volitional systems. The individual is a system within himself, and the competition and cooperation of his own volitional tendencies provide material for the systematisation of character, for preference of one tendency to another, for moral judgment therefore. Accordingly, were man conceivable as a solitary being, he would in his own life provide the material and opportunity for moral judgment, although, as a matter of fact, he might be incapable of making such judgments. There would remain something, not to be identified with the social life, as the content of morality.

It is not therefore simply owing to its predominantly social content that morality would be impossible for the mere individual. It is rather because the mere individual would not possess the intellectual characteristics of a self-conscious person. His consciousness of self has been developed and defined only in connexion with his consciousness of other selves; apart from this social consciousness he would not think of himself as a person —he would have no consciousness of self. His experience generally owes its precision and importance to the fact that it can be shared by other observers, and his truths are recognised as valid because they appeal to others in the same way as to himself. Further, the language in which he expresses his judgments and by means of which he has been able to rise to conceptual knowledge is a social formation, received by him from the social environment and the historical traditions into which

he has entered. Apart from all these social influences, the theoretical knowledge of the individual could be as scanty, or rather as non-existent, as his knowledge of morality.

We cannot, therefore, make the social, any more than the psychical, origin of morality an objection to its validity, unless we are prepared at the same time to allow that the social origin of science is an objection to its validity. The exact sense in which moral judgments have objective validity, and their relation in this respect to scientific propositions, is a question that remains to be discussed. For the moment it is sufficient to have obviated the objection taken at the threshold to the objectivity of value on the ground of the psychological or historical origin of the judgments of value or because human intercourse is a necessary condition of their formation.

So far we have been occupied in defending a point of view from which the objective character of judgments of value may be asserted. Their meaning is not that the subject desires a certain object or is pleased with it, any more than the judgment of sense-perception means that he has certain sensations. It is possible that it may be by means of conative or affective experience that we arrive at a judgment of value, just as experience in the way of sensation leads to the judgment of sense-perception. But in neither case does the origin constitute the meaning of the judgment. In both cases there is a reference to something beyond the mental state of the subject—to a value which he appreciates or to an object which he perceives. The argument has been restricted to the typical case of the moral judgment, for it is with

morality that we shall be mainly concerned in the sequel, and it is unnecessary to extend the discussion to the other classes of judgments of value.

The defence of its objectivity brings the appreciation of worth or value into touch with that description of the relations and qualities of things which is given by scientific judgments. And the question accordingly arises whether there is, after all, any fundamental distinction between the attitudes of appreciation and description, and whether the judgment of value is not simply the recognition of a relation between existing things, with which science is not concerned, or of an additional quality which they may possess. The view which has been examined in the preceding paragraphs is indeed one way—and perhaps the most thoroughgoing way—of identifying the judgment of value with a judgment of existence, or of reducing 'ought' to 'is.' On that view the value predicated in the judgment not only arises out of, but can be reduced to, the mode of valuation; it consists in the relation which some content presented to a subject has to that subject's sensibility, thus producing pleasure, or to some desire or system of conative tendencies of the subject, to which it promises satisfaction. That view, accordingly, would explain value as a relation to the subject; but it has already been shown to be founded upon a confusion between the process by means of which we become aware of value and the value itself of which we become aware.

Different features are presented by the type of view which explains the meaning of value by resolving it into some kind of objective relation of things. Explanations of this sort are familiar. For instance, we may approve

a certain distribution of wealth between the persons engaged in its production, and give as a reason for our approval that the distribution is fair or that it realises justice; we may say that its value consists just in this fairness or justice, and we may at the same time identify this fairness or justice with a certain objective relation between labour expended and remuneration received. Or again, we may admire a work of art, and hold that its value consists in its beauty and that this beauty can be analysed into certain relations between its component parts. Thus, in these and other cases, the value may appear to consist in relations which actually hold of certain objects. But it does so only because we identify value with the object valued. We would not approve the given economic distribution were it not for the fairness of it or those relations in which that fairness consists; we would not admire the work of art were it not for the harmony it displays or the relations in which that harmony consists. So far the analysis is correct. But the appeal to objective relations only shows that they are the ground of our attributing value to the object; not that they are themselves this value. Justice or fairness may consist in certain objective relations; but the value ascribed to justice is an added predicate over and above these relations. Harmony in the same way may consist in certain objective relations of colour or of tone; but the value of harmony does not consist in these relations; it is a further predicate which characterises their presence.

Seeing that value cannot be reduced to a relation between objects shall we then say that it is a quality of an object much in the same way as its shape and colour

are qualities of a material thing? We certainly use the same forms of speech in both cases. We speak of a good man or a beautiful statue just as we do of a yellow orange; and we say the man is good or the statue is beautiful as we say the orange is yellow and round. The mode of predication is the same; but there is at least a *prima facie* difference in the way in which goodness or value belongs to an object from the inherence in a substance of the qualities which are held to make up its nature. The difference has sometimes been regarded as a difference of level—if we may call it so. As the qualities of matter have been distinguished into primary and secondary, it has been suggested that value is a third kind of quality which may be called a tertiary quality. Now, the objects to which the distinction of primary and secondary applies are all of them material things, that is, they are objects to which intrinsic value can scarcely be attributed; consequently, to talk of value as a tertiary quality does little more than set value vaguely apart from what we ordinarily call qualities. Further, when the distinction between primary and secondary qualities is regarded as of fundamental validity, it is held to consist in this, that the secondary qualities are due to the subjective affection of the percipient and are not constitutive of the nature of the thing at all: the primary qualities alone are said to be truly qualities of the objectively existing thing and the secondary to be simply mental effects caused by some modification of the primary qualities. If the tertiary qualities were to be defined in accordance with this view, then we should expect them to be one degree further removed from the nature of the object. Like

the secondary qualities they would be results which that nature produces in something else, to wit, the mind which appreciates them. They would resemble the secondary qualities in their subjectivity, that is, be mental effects, only a degree more subjectified. And this would lead us back to the subjective explanation of value, which has been already examined and rejected.

Value is predicated of an object by means of the same verbal form as a quality is predicated; but there seems to be a difference in the mode of predication which is not brought out by the verbal expression. Qualities may belong not only to existing objects but also to objects which are not conceived as existing, and without any reference to their possible existence. Thus we may say that the equilateral triangle has the quality (or property) of being equiangular, just as a particular orange may have the quality yellow; and in the former case we do not need to refer to any existing triangle, or to a triangle on the hypothesis of its existence. The property belongs to the essence of the equilateral triangle, or follows from its definition, without regard to the consideration whether an equilateral triangle, or any triangle, exists or can exist. But it is not so when goodness or value is predicated. When we say love is good or has value, we mean that love is worth existing as a living fact; when we say that a just social order is good, we mean that such a constitution is worth existing or that a social order ought to be constituted in accordance with justice. We are not engaged simply in showing what the concept love or justice implies. The mere concept unless realised in fact is neither good nor evil: it is only as so realised, or on the assumption

of its realisation, that it is called either. Thus, when we predicate value of anything, we pass from the mere concept or essence of the thing, with its qualities, to a bearing which this essence has upon existence: it is worth existing or ought to be[1].

Hence, if we are still inclined to speak of value or goodness as a quality of the object to which we ascribe it, we must allow that it is a quality of a quite peculiar kind. "The heavens," says Meinong[2], "are called beautiful in no other sense than that in which they are called blue." He admits one difference, however, in that the experience (*Erlebnis*) in the former case is not merely a process of apprehending an object. And this difference goes deeper than he allows. We are not simply apprehending an object when we predicate value of it; our predicate, therefore, cannot signify merely a quality of the object, for in that case it would be nothing more than a way of apprehending the object. When we say 'the sky is beautiful' or 'the man is good,' meaning by that an assertion of the worth of the beautiful sky or good man, our judgment of value is indeed *based upon* an apprehension of qualities—the colours of the sky or the volitional attitude of the man. But it is not merely the assertion of these qualities or of another quality in addition. When we predicate worth or value we assert or imply that the object is worth being or ought to be; and this is fully recognised by Meinong. But, if this predicate were simply a quality constituting the nature of the object, then the assertion that the

[1] Cp. Urban, *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. XIII (1916), pp. 449 ff.

[2] 'Für die Psychologie und gegen den Psychologismus in der allgemeinen Werttheorie,' *Logos*, III (1912), p. 11.

Plato? The reality of things is what they mean, their meaning is determined by their place in the world order: that place is determined by ~~their~~ its relation to the supreme good, the ideal?

object ought to be as it is, would be equivalent to saying that it is as it is, which would be a tautology, as Croce holds the assertion of positive value to be[1]. Or again, when we call an object bad or ugly we assert or imply that it ought not to be as it is; and, if its negative value were simply one of its constitutive qualities, this assertion would be a logical contradiction, as Croce holds is always the case with the negative value-judgment[2].

The qualities of an object differ from the value-predicate in this respect that they may belong either to an existing thing or to something which does not exist although it in some sense is, but in either case they have no special bearing upon the existence of the thing of which they are predicated. With value it is not so; it has a definite bearing upon existence, and can always be stated so as to bring out this reference: the thing is worth existing, or ought to be, or to be in such-and-such a manner. And at the same time, this form distinguishes it from the descriptive propositions of natural science. It cannot be put into words without the unique notion indicated by 'worth' or 'ought' or some similar phrase. Value is not reduced to an existential proposition; but the notion of value always implies a relation to existence—though a relation to which the natural sciences are indifferent.

Value, accordingly, is not to be classified as a quality of things, or as a relation between things; but certain relations are implied by it. In the first place, as is shown by some examples already given[3], the ground for assigning

[1] 'Ueber die sogenannten Werturteile,' *Logos*, I (1910–11), p. 73.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 72. Cp. Urban, *Journal of Philosophy*, XIII (1916), p. 686.
[3] See above, pp. 73 f.

4. The question of validity can be raised only where some objectivity is already assumed.
a) valid & invalid judgments
(1) Both conditioned by antecedent causes.
2. Only valid judgments have, in addition, a grounds upon which validity depends (reasons)
(3) On naturalistic basis there can be no distinction

value may be found in certain relations within the objective continuum to which interest is directed; and this point will be dealt with later[1]. In the second place, value always implies a claim upon, or postulate of, existence; and this existential reference now calls for further discussion.

[1] See below, pp. 138 ff.

Collateral Notes to this chapter.

1. Psychological Fallacy.
   a). The good is that which is pleasure or satisfies desire.
      (1) Feeling of approval: makes morality a series of changing emotional responses
      (2) Satisfaction of desire: destroys distinction between good and evil.
   (b) Certain basic truth: Approval and desire are always elements of a moral situation.
   (c) The good is a characteristic not only of the but of mind and conditions of mind.

2. Historical Schools of ethics have embodied these various meanings
   (a) The good is that which is approved or dis
   (b) Kant: Feeling of obligation.
   (c) Voluntaristic theories, good = useful.

3. Moral judgments have exactly the same basis as any other type of judgment. "Our judgment of obj. is made on the basis of the nature of the objects

1) There has been trad. separation between value & existence
2) The sciences stand back of this separation of existance & value, and on the side of the existential.
3. Sorley insists that existence & value are both aspects of the same reality. IV
a) need to realize that scientific facts are not complete
b) values are factual

# THE CRITERIA OF MORAL VALUE

CERTAIN points have been made clear in the preceding discussion: the persistence of value-judgments in our experience; the prominence among these of the moral judgment or appreciation of good and evil; and the irreducible significance of these judgments. Their meaning is not explained by searching for their causes in the phenomena of emotion or of desire or in the history of society. The nature and significance of these judgments, and of the moral judgment in particular, require some further elucidation.

The moral judgment is not exhaustive as regards the things concerning which it is passed. The same things may be also the subjects of non-moral or positive judgments. We may say that pleasure or knowledge or justice or love is good; but, in so saying, we allow that these same things may be, and indeed always are, appropriate subjects for judgments of a different kind, which form the basis of the positive sciences. Anything which we approve or disapprove morally may also have its causes traced, its structure analysed, and in general its relations to other things investigated. The same holds of other value-judgments. Whatever is valued must have qualities which can be examined scientifically and about which causal and other assertions can be made, just as, on the other hand, when we have

discovered all that can be discovered about the causes of things, the question of their value still remains. The two orders of proposition are concerned with the same subjects, and differ only in their predicates. It is the predicate which brings out the characteristic difference of moral approval or æsthetic admiration as distinguished from scientific generalisation.

But, as we have seen, value is not separated from existence. It is even more closely connected with it than certain departments of positive science. These may deal solely with the relation of concepts—or of things which, to use an old term, now once more in common use, *subsist* only and do not *exist*. All relations of logical implication are of this order. Thus if I say that the equilateral triangle is equiangular I do not mean that those actually existing three-sided figures whose sides are exactly equal will also enclose equal angles, or that when and if anyone succeeds in constructing a figure with its three sides equal it will also have its three angles equal. These truths follow from my statement; but the statement itself is not about existing things, but about the relation of concepts or mere subsistents. The assertion is that the concept equilateral triangle implies the concept equiangular triangle—whether such a thing as an equilateral triangle have any existence or not. Can we say the same of ethical propositions? If the proposition is 'pleasure is good,' or 'knowledge is good,' or 'love is good,' is the assertion about the implication of concepts? Do I mean that the concept pleasure—though pleasure were never experienced by any sentient being—is good? or that the mere concept knowledge is good, although knowledge had no existence,

and no one ever knew anything? Or that love is good, meaning by love simply a concept which has what is called being or subsistence, but does not exist at all, and is not manifested in the emotions or character of living beings?

If we think of answering these questions in the affirmative, we have only to realise our meaning to see grounds for hesitation. Consider, for instance, the simplest of them all—pleasure; and let us assume for the moment that pleasant experience is good. But what is meant by saying that pleasure is good? It may be a perfectly legitimate general expression for the goodness that belongs to any and every actual experience of pleasure. But then it refers to actual experiences, and their goodness is not now in question. The question is this: apart from any actual or possible pleasant experience, would pleasure—the bare concept or subsistent pleasure—be good? To this the answer must be that the mere concept pleasure is neither good nor evil: and the same must be said of love or knowledge or anything else, if used to signify merely a concept and not an existing thing or experience.

When we predicate goodness or other value, it is always predicated upon the assumption or under the hypothesis of existence. The existence need not be actual or present; but it is only as existing—or if it exists—that the thing is held to be good. "It would be good for us to be there" is as fair an example of a moral judgment as "it is good for us to be here." But it has also as plain a reference to existence. Only, in the latter case existence is given as actual; in the former it is merely postulated as possible. When Kant said

that there is nothing good without qualification except a good will, and at the same time admitted that perhaps a truly good will had never existed in human history, he yet postulated the good will as a possible existent whose existence, if actualised, would be good. It was to the good will conceived as actual that he attributed goodness, while he also recognised that there might be nothing in existence which could thus be called good without qualification. Without the postulate of existence, expressed or implied, actual or hypothetical, the attribution of goodness or of any value would be out of place. This existence need not be asserted; we do not need to believe in the actual existence of the object, but we must contemplate it as existing. There need not be a judgment, but there must be an assumption[1] (as it has been called) of its existence. This assumption may

[1] When I pass the judgment 'A is B' or 'A is not B,' two factors are included in my mental process: first, the mere positing of the proposition, and secondly, the belief in the statement as true. But propositions may be posited without being believed, and a term is required to describe this attitude. For this purpose Meinong has introduced the term *Annahme*, which is commonly translated 'assumption.' Assumption occupies a place intermediate between presentation and judgment (Meinong, *Ueber Annahmen*, 2nd edit., p. 6), but its expression, like the expression of a judgment, is a proposition. The *Erlebnis* or mental process in assuming will vary according to the purpose in view. The enquirer may formulate a hypothesis of which he is almost convinced and proceed to test it by experiment: this hypothesis is an assumption. Or he may state a hypothesis which he means to dispute, and draw out its consequences till he has completed a *reductio ad absurdum*: this hypothesis also is an assumption. An intermediate case is where there is little or no conviction or expectation as to where the truth lies, but each logically possible hypothesis is formulated in turn and tested with a view to eliciting its truth or falsehood: all these hypotheses are assumptions. Or the enquirer's interest may lie altogether outside of the question of the truth of the proposition. The mathematician, for instance, may work out a system of transcendental geometry on the assumption that space has more than three dimensions, without caring

take various forms. It may be a mere presumption and the question of actual or only possible existence may not even be raised, as when we say "the punctual performance of duty is good," without considering and without needing to consider whether punctual performance of duty is an actual occurrence, or something approximately realised only, or something merely supposed to exist. On the other hand, existence may be taken as given, as when we ascribe goodness to some concrete situation or actual person; and in this case we have an implicit judgment rather than what is technically called an assumption. Or the assumption may be definitely formulated without one's committing oneself to belief in it. This assumption is a hypothesis on which we proceed—whether we are going to test it by drawing out its conclusions, or whether our interest lies outside the truth of the assumption. Thus, when we say perfection is good, or a painless life would be good, or a sinless life would be good, we do not assert

whether it has or can have, and without even raising the question. Similarly, imaginative statements, such as the record of incidents in a novel, are assumptions—unless for the author who has persuaded himself of their truth or for the reader who believes them. Assumptions may however lead to judgments. Thus the assumption of *n*-dimensional space leads to new systems of propositions: though these propositions themselves need not necessarily be believed—only their implication by the preliminary assumption. Similarly with the work of imagination: the author believes that, assuming the existence of his characters, he has described their actions—not what they actually did, for there were no such persons, but what they would have done had they existed.

Both the judgment and the assumption are expressed by the proposition; but it is possible for there to be no explicit proposition, and yet for a propositional relation, or an 'objective,' to be taken for granted. Thus Prof. Urban distinguishes from both assumption and judgment the "primary undisturbed *presumption* of reality" which is, he holds, the essential condition of any appreciation of worth (*Valuation*, p. 43).

that, and do not need to enquire whether, the thing we call good actually exists: what we mean is that it would be good if it existed. Accordingly, the existence implied concerning the subject of the value-judgment need not be asserted or believed, but it must at least be assumed. Apart from its claim upon existence in some such way nothing is either good or evil.

This conclusion points to another result of some importance. Ethics is distinguished from the natural sciences by the fact that its propositions are value-propositions and not causal propositions: it predicates value, not causation; and it is further distinguished from mathematics (and abstract science generally) because its main propositions[1] are not concerned with the logical implication of concepts. It does not predicate causation, and its propositions are therefore unlike those of natural science. They assume the existence of their subject, and this marks the difference between ethics and mathematics.

The moral consciousness is thus one aspect of the consciousness of existing reality or of something contemplated as existing. In order to be good, or for that matter in order to be evil, a thing must first of all exist. But on the other hand the ground of its goodness lies in something else than its mere existence. Existence of itself does not imply goodness nor does it imply evil. If a reason can be found for saying that a thing is good,

[1] By its main propositions I mean those in which 'good' or some similar notion is predicated. Other ethical propositions may be concerned with the implications of concepts, such as "where there is no property there is no injustice" and "no government allows absolute liberty." It was reflexion on propositions of the latter kind alone that led Locke to think it possible to "place morality amongst the sciences capable of demonstration" (*Essay*, book IV, chap. iii, § 18).

then this reason must lie in some quality or relation of the thing; it cannot be due to its mere existence, for otherwise the distinction between good and evil would disappear. The moral order cuts across the actual order of existence as presented in sense-perception and described by science. Two things therefore hold of the subject of the moral judgment. It must exist or be assumed as existing. But it is called good not merely because it exists, but in virtue of some quality or combination of qualities which distinguish it, or some relation in which it stands to other things. Yet these qualities or relations would not be called good unless postulated as existing. The predicate good therefore divides existence (real or possible) into two classes: the things to which this predicate applies and the things to which it does not apply.

So far accordingly, that is, from the examination of the moral consciousness, no support is given to either of two opposed doctrines which are common in metaphysical ethics. One of these doctrines equates goodness with reality; but when reality is used as synonymous with or as implying existence, this doctrine is faced by the fact that the moral consciousness distinguishes some existing things as good and others as evil. The other and opposed doctrine looks upon good as a quality which is implied by certain other qualities merely as such and irrespective of any reference to existence; this doctrine does not allow for the fact, to which equal witness is given by the moral consciousness, that goodness does not belong to any quality by itself but only on the assumption of its existence. It is not the mere concept or idea but the existence corre-

sponding to the concept, or the realisation of the idea, that forms the subject of the moral judgment. That judgment, therefore, always involves both something assumed as existing and a universal by means of which it is approved or disapproved.

The view which has been set forth here may be illustrated by an ingenious essay in literary criticism and perhaps gain support from it. In his essay 'On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century,' Charles Lamb defended the licentious plays of Congreve and Wycherley by arguing that the characters represented in them have no connexion with real life. "It is altogether a speculative scene of things," he said, "which has no reference whatever to the world that is.... The whole is a passing pageant, where we should sit as unconcerned at the issues, for life or death, as at the battle of the frogs and mice. But, like Don Quixote, we take part against the puppets, and quite as impertinently." The comedies cannot be acted any longer, he says, because we insist on regarding the characters as real men and women instead of the puppets they are. We are unable to enjoy the play just because our imagination is spoiled by "the exclusive and all-devouring drama of common life, where the moral point is everything." Probably Lamb did not intend his criticism to be taken too seriously. He knew that dramatic interest demands at least the illusion of reality and that mere puppets would spoil the illusion. But he wished to justify his own enjoyment in reading the plays, and he saw that, in order to keep moral interests out of the drama, it was necessary at the same time to "escape from the pressure of reality." He was seeking a moral

holiday; he wished "to take an airing beyond the diocese of the strict conscience" and, "for a dream-while or so, to imagine a world with no meddling restrictions." Lamb felt—and his instinct was sound—that the moral holiday must be taken in a region as remote from the actual world as is fairy land. "Somewhere east of Suez" is not far enough away. In our world good and evil are insistent; but outside it, among the puppets of our imagination, we may feign their absence: and indeed they are irrelevant unless the puppets are somehow regarded as human beings with human surroundings.

We become aware of existence as a particular—a here and now; from this we pass on to the idea of future existence and backwards to that of past existence; even when we imagine the existence of something without assigning definite place and date to it, this idea also is founded on a particular apprehension and distinguished from it only by the loss of its concrete determinateness. Accordingly, seeing that moral judgment proceeds on an assumption of existence, we shall expect the system of moral values to be built up gradually upon the basis of particular appreciations. Value resides in the particular. But it does not belong to it in virtue of its mere particularity; it belongs to the realisation by the particular of a certain character. The full determination of this character would be the completion of an ethical system, or, generally, of a system of values. It has been expressed, so far as moral value is concerned, in different ways by different schools, but chiefly in two ways: sometimes by an idea

of the Supreme Good, sometimes by the conception of a Universal Law or Categorical Imperative. This conception and that idea are expressions for the ultimate ground of goodness—for that character or sum of characters which (or some of which) are possessed by everything which is rightly termed good. But neither the idea of a Supreme Good nor the conception of a Universal Law is present—at any rate, explicitly present—in our ordinary moral judgments. And if we attempt to get to our primary moral judgments we find even less trace of this universal conception of the things called good.

The traditional doctrine of the Intuitional moralists was different from that expressed here. It followed the Scholastic doctrine of morality by representing the moral judgment as arrived at deductively from a general principle of morality. The particular case (it was supposed) was first of all identified as a member of a class or instance of a principle; and this class or principle was supposed to be known intuitively as good. The moral syllogism had accordingly a universal principle of morality as its major premiss; the minor premiss brought the particular case under the general principle; and the conclusion which resulted was the moral judgment. Thus, in spite of the apparent immediateness of the moral judgment, it was represented as the conclusion of a syllogism; and this conclusion could not have been drawn unless the major premiss—attributing goodness to a universal—had been first of all recognised. In this respect Kant's doctrine resembles the Scholastic or intuitional. According to him all moral judgment is an application of the general principle that goodness

belongs only to will in so far as it is determined by the conception of a law which admits of use as a universal principle. Kant does indeed avoid a difficulty which faces the traditional intuitionists—the difficulty which arises from their assumption either of some one general conception (such as happiness or perfection) or of a number of such general conceptions (such as justice, benevolence, and the like) as the ultimate subjects of ethical axioms, independently of all experience of happiness or perfection or justice or benevolence. The difficulty for the intuitionists is that these general conceptions are themselves only formed by the experience of being happy or of seeing or doing just or benevolent actions. All these principles were rejected by Kant as material; and indeed it is clear that they are arrived at through experience and criticism of life, and cannot therefore be primary elements in the moral consciousness. The principle which he substituted for them was not open to the same objection; but, as purely formal, it encountered another difficulty, for it was unable to yield any concrete ethical content. Both attempts at a rational ethics thus failed for opposite but corresponding reasons. The traditional intuitionism laid down concrete moral doctrines, but it arrived at these by assuming as primary conceptions which are clearly gathered from experience. Kantianism avoided this error, but only to remain shut up to a purely formal doctrine which was without connexion with the content of life and thus failed to give a system of moral values. It reduced the principle of morality to the formal proposition that the good will alone is good or that goodness ought to be realised or willed[1].

[1] See below, pp. 143 ff.

The universal of morality is contained in particulars and at first concealed by them; and the moralist's problem is to elucidate the universal by reason of which these particular cases are appropriate subjects for the moral judgment. Goodness is, first of all, recognised in a concrete situation. The moral judgment is in the first instance a perceptive judgment, as Aristotle held[1]; and ethical science is based on these perceptive judgments just as natural science is based on the judgments of sense-perception. The data of ethics are accordingly the particular appreciations or judgments of good or evil passed in certain concrete situations. These are moral intuitions, in the literal sense, for they are immediate and of the nature of perception, not the results of reasoning. But they are not intuitions as understood by the Scholastic or modern moralists of the intuitional school: for they are not general propositions, and other moral truths are not derived from them by deduction. Nor have they any infallible claim to truth. In this respect they are on the same level as the judgments of sense-perception. These judgments, although natural science ultimately depends upon them, may also be mistaken. The square tower seen in the distance appears to be round; different colours seem the same in a faint light; we see the sun move across the heavens from east to west. All these are judgments of perception which further perception itself leads us to revise and amend. The illusions of the senses are corrected by the means that cause them, that is, by additional sense-perceptions, which make comparison and criticism possible. Similar mistakes and illusions may enter into

[1] *Ethics*, book VI, chap. viii, p. 1142 a 27.

our judgments of approval and disapproval, and they need to be examined and corrected in the same way. But the possibility of error does not, in one case any more than in the other, imply the impossibility of truth. It only compels an enquiry into the criteria of validity.

For this enquiry we must use an appropriate method, and the method must have regard to the data at our disposal. It would be inappropriate, for example, to imitate mathematical method, although Descartes regarded it as the only valid type of thinking. For mathematics begins with definite concepts and proceeds to elaborate the implication of one concept by another; and for this procedure moral experience does not provide us with the requisite conceptual material. All knowledge which is concerned with the data of experience must follow a different method. It has to bring the content of experience into order, consistency, and system; and this content requires to be sifted and criticised by thought. The inconsistencies in the data of moral experience make it impossible to hold that the propositions which directly express them are always valid. On the other hand these data may not be indiscriminately rejected, for there is no other material before us. The general validity of moral experience must be accepted in order to make possible the criticism of any portion of it by the assistance of the remainder. The work of thought is to clear away contradiction within the content of morality, to find the underlying harmony, if there be such a harmony, and to construct a system. It is, in the first place, a search for principles.

The variety of moral opinion arises out of an im-

mense number of particular judgments of good and evil. These judgments have been pronounced upon many different situations and under different conditions. The difficulty is to extract from them general principles which can be relied upon as true expressions of moral value. In confronting this difficulty we must ask whether there are any criteria of validity which can be applied to moral judgments and by which they can be tested. Certain criteria may be suggested.

1. Every moral judgment claims validity. When I assert 'this is good' or 'that is evil,' I do not mean that I experience desire or aversion, or that I have a feeling of liking or indignation. These subjective experiences may be present; but the judgment points not to a personal or subjective state of mind but to the presence of an objective value in the situation. What is implied in this objectivity? Clearly, in the first place, it implies independence of the judging subject. If my assertion 'this is good' is valid, then it is valid not for me only but for everyone. If I say 'this is good,' and another person, referring to the same situation, says 'this is not good,' one or other of us must be mistaken. The proposition is either true or false; it cannot be both. The validity of a moral judgment does not depend upon the person by whom the judgment is made. In this sense it is impersonal.

There is another sense in which moral value is sometimes said to be independent of the person. It is said that what is right for me to do must, if all the circumstances are the same, be right for any one else. And this also has been held to be an ethical axiom. But with this axiom—if it be such—we have at present

nothing to do. So far as we are concerned an action may be right for A and wrong for B. We have as yet only asserted that the person who passes the judgment is indifferent, not that the person about whom it is passed is indifferent. The latter proposition has to do with a special application of moral value—its application to the conduct of individual persons. The former proposition is perfectly general, and is a preliminary postulate of the existence of ethics as a system of truths. There can be no ethical truth if the same proposition is valid when asserted by one man and invalid when asserted by another. If the proposition 'A is good' is true, then it is true by whomsoever and whenever it is asserted.

This postulate is inconsistent with one meaning of the favourite phrase 'the relativity of morals.' If moral judgments are simply expressions of a subjective emotion, then they are all in a sense correct, for the existence of the emotion is not denied; but they have no further validity—nor, indeed, meaning. But we have already seen reason to dismiss this view. And my postulate contains nothing inconsistent with the development of moral ideas or with the fact that different conduct is appropriate to different circumstances, or even to different persons in the same circumstances. Customs vary indefinitely and moral opinion varies with them. There is the greatest difference, for example, between the practice and opinion of the head-hunters of Borneo on the one hand and the practice and opinion of the Society of Friends on the other. The latter condemn the actions which are the daily and admired performance of the former. The head-hunter of Borneo approves with enthusiasm what the follower of George Fox

condemns and abhors. Is it possible to institute any fruitful comparison between ideas and habits so far apart? Is it not better simply to discriminate the two stages of social development and say that moral practice and opinion are relative to the social order? The Quaker condemns homicide; and this condemnation is bound up with his religious and political creed. The head-hunter follows the way of life of his tribe and conforms to its standards, without any thought of general principles. If we seek to realise a special concrete situation which the latter approves, we must put ourselves in his position, recognise the facts of his life, and allow for the social pressure that surrounds him. It is difficult for the modern to do this, from the midst of a civilised society in which peaceful living is secured, and the necessary means for that security are not obtruded on his notice. But if he is able to do this, and to apprehend the same situation as the savage, he may still say 'this is wrong' when the former says 'this is right'—the 'this' referring in both cases to the same situation. When the two propositions have thus clearly the same subject, they cannot both be true if they contradict one another. This follows from our postulate. Did it not hold there would be no meaning in the opposition of moral opinion or in the progress of moral ideas. It is only because, in any given situation, there is always a right and a wrong method of reacting upon it, that we can explain the true nature of the relativity of morals. The phrase loses its meaning, because morality loses its meaning, if the same thing may be both right and wrong, good and evil.

2. This character of objectivity, therefore, and of the universality implied by objectivity, belongs to the moral

judgment, as to other judgments. If valid as asserted by me, it is equally valid for everyone. No proposition can claim to belong to ethics unless it has this objectivity and the resulting universality. But it is a characteristic which, at the same time, brings out the mixture of truth and error in our moral judgments. They all claim validity; but they cannot all be valid, because they are not all consistent with one another. Any moral judgment which is valid must be coherent with all other valid moral judgments: at least it cannot be inconsistent with any. Freedom from contradiction, coherence, and thus possible systematisation are criteria by which the validity of any moral judgment may be tested. If any such judgment is inconsistent with some other judgment known to be valid then it cannot be valid also; if it is consistent with other valid judgments then it may be valid. And if it is capable of entering into a system of moral judgments along with them and thus harmonising with them, the probability of its validity is increased. This probability may be of various degrees. When the judgment in question is logically implied by other judgments known to be valid, its validity is certain.

This represents and in its completeness applies to a further stage in the development of moral ideas. So far I have spoken only of the primary moral judgment whose subject is some concrete individual situation—a this or that. And, if we kept to such particular judgments, science and system would be impossible: only a multitude of judgments some of which might be esteemed valid and others invalid; while the only opening for consistency or inconsistency would be between different persons' judgments concerning the same situa-

tion. But the moral judgment, even though it concern the particular, always implies a universal. When I say 'this is good,' it is because of some character of the 'this' that it is called good. The head-hunter may judge 'this is good' when he displays his first triumph and proves his manhood upon some member of an alien tribe. He does not reflect at all upon the ground of his approval. But, if he did reflect, he might find that what he approved in calling his deed good or right was his attainment of the standard of his fellow-tribesmen—his contribution to the union and power of a community which lived amongst enemies and must be vigilant and strong in order to survive. It is thus in virtue of a universal present in the particular that the particular is approved. The given action is held to be right because it contributes to tribal preservation or strength or unity. When a later or more civilised observer reflects upon the same incident, he looks from a different point of view and sees further. In his eyes the gain to one community has its set-off in the loss to another; what strengthens one tribe at the same time weakens another; the action may even be in his eyes part of a system which keeps every community which practises it in constant danger of death and with the barest minimum of the goods of life. Therefore the same situation which the tribesman welcomes as good, he calls evil. The two judgments upon the same concrete situation contradict one another. But this contradiction may not apply to the underlying grounds of the judgment, if these have been correctly analysed. These may, indeed, be largely identical and differ only in degree of comprehensiveness. The ground of the savage's judgment might be ex-

pressed in the proposition 'tribal welfare is good,' and by this would be meant the welfare of this particular tribe, which (as in this case) might imply the hurt of another. The ground of the civilised man's judgment may be 'common welfare is good,' and he will not limit common welfare to the welfare of a particular tribe. Underlying the judgment of both, is the idea of a community and of the common welfare, however differently conceived; and it is on this account that the predicate 'good' is applicable. But the judgments differ in that the community in view is narrower in the one case than in the other, while common welfare may be differently understood.

This analysis brings out two points. It shows that moral judgments, which in their first expression flatly (1) contradict one another, may yet have an underlying principle of agreement; the moral element, when elicited from each judgment, may not show the same opposition as their first statement expressed; it may even be identical in the two cases. In the second place, the criticism of the moral judgment reveals a universal element in its subject; the subject is not a mere 'this'; it is a 'this' of a certain determinate kind; and it is (2) owing to its character in this respect, that is, to the universal element in it, that it is held to be good or evil. The same universal element may be the underlying ground which makes possible moral judgments regarding many different subjects. Criticism will therefore reveal the possibility of systematising moral judgments with respect to the principles which they imply.

In this way we may arrive at a degree of coherence

between moral judgments far closer than any mere absence of contradiction shown by the primary judgments on different moral situations. The principles involved in these judgments may be related in a variety of ways—by the kind of objects to which they refer, by the degree of generality in which these objects are taken, and so on. If the predicates of two such judgments conflict (if in the one case the predicate is 'good' and in the other 'evil'), we investigate the principle involved in the subject of each judgment, and from the relation of the two principles, seek to understand the reason for the difference in the predicates. Systematisation will, in this way, compel us often to reject the first expression of the moral consciousness, but yet without throwing doubt upon the fundamental validity of that consciousness.

In this way system becomes a criterion of moral validity. Particular judgments which conflict with a system of judgments must themselves be judged by that system. In such a case we do not merely compare two judgments, both of which cannot be valid and between which there is room for hesitation and no clear ground for decision. On the one side we have the weight of a systematic whole, on the other the single conflicting judgment standing alone; and the system of judgments gives a stronger claim to moral validity. If this criterion still seem unsatisfactory, we must remember that the test is the same as that by which the accuracy of sense-perception is established. What we learn to call illusions of perception are in their immediate nature simply perceptions among other perceptions; but they conflict with the systematic ordering of

the perceptions which lie at the basis of our scientific generalisations; we are therefore forced to reject their claim to objective validity, and we seek a new explanation of them as illusions.

3. It is possible, however, that the issue may not be between a single judgment on one side and a system of judgments on the other: but that there may be system on both sides. This is certainly to some extent the case in morality, as it also is in science; and we must proceed to enquire whether there is any further criterion of moral validity by which we may distinguish between system and system. This further test is that of comprehensiveness. It is possible that moral judgments may admit of being grouped into a system, so that within the system there is perfect coherence, while, nevertheless, a great mass of moral judgments is left outside this system and in conflict with it, but forming a different system. In such a case of conflict between system and system we may be inclined at first to appeal to a quantitative estimate and to compare the systems according to the number of the facts of moral experience which they are able consistently to explain; and we may give the preference to the system of greater comprehensiveness, that is, to the system which is able to explain the greater number of facts.

Rival moral systems which exemplify a conflict of this kind are not unknown. Perhaps they are most evident in the department of ethics which has to do with political affairs. Tribal custom was the original moral standard; and, although moral ideas have been gradually freed from tribal limitations, the community as nation country or State remains a partial embodiment

of morality. So it happens that, even when egoism is not the principle of individual morality, a political egoism often continues to be regarded as the proper standard for the State and its representatives. It is possible for such a system of ideas to endure when egoism is seen to be an immoral principle for the individual. The State has a measure of self-sufficiency which the individual entirely lacks; it might still persist if, like the Ireland of Berkeley's imagination, it were surrounded by a wall of brass a thousand cubits high[1]. Thus it happens that, in every powerful State, many thinkers share the view of Bismarck and Treitschke that the only ethical principle which is valid for the guidance of a State's activity is its own preservation and the increase of its power[2]. This principle makes it possible to systematise many judgments as to what is good and what is evil in political conduct. But it comes into conflict with the corresponding but opposed views of the representatives of other States. If the rulers of State A hold that the only principle by which political action should be judged is the maintenance and increase of the power of that State, others, in a different country, will hold that the only principle of political ethics is the maintenance and increase of the power of State B. And the familiar conflict in political morality results.

Now, if we are to apply the test of comprehensiveness, it must be allowed to be, at any rate in the first view of it, inadequate. Neither State A nor State B can make any claim to represent a comprehensive universality of interests. One may be larger and more

[1] Berkeley, *The Querist*, Q. 134.
[2] Cp. H. v. Treitschke, *Politik* (1897), vol. I, p. 100.

complexly organised than the other, and the ethical principle which it adopts may comprehend a greater number and variety of particular appreciations. In relative comprehensiveness, the principle which takes as its standard the increase of the power of State A may appear to be clearly superior to the principle whose standard is the increase of the power of State B. But this bare quantitative test fails to supply any true moral principle or any criterion between the conflicting principles.

The test of comprehensiveness will not be satisfactorily met by a process of adding up particulars and comparing systems according to the number of such particulars which they can include. We must find a principle which will comprehend both the conflicting systems, and by explaining their opposition will justify whatever validity they possess. To revert to the example. The principle of political egoism is of value on all occasions which concern only the internal policy of a single State; but in international relations it is inadequate, not in one case only but in all, because it sets different States in opposition to one another. This marks the limits of its validity. It is of no assistance as an ethical principle when the interests of different States conflict. Apart from this conflict we can see in it something that is not really egoism, but is the recognition of a larger and common life which has claims upon the thought and activity of its constituent members. Its underlying principle, we may say, is that of the ethical importance of the organised community and the claim of the latter upon the devotion of its members. But the principle is not vindicated when one

such community oppresses another with a view to the increase of its own power. On the contrary, the principle is misunderstood or relaxed, because the still larger community of the concert of nations or of human society is sacrificed to particularist claims. The criterion of comprehensiveness is fully vindicated only when the moral principle of wider sweep has proved its claim to validity by including the narrower principle which it supplants. It is not sufficient for it to cover a greater number of particular judgments than the competing principle does; it must take up the competing principle into itself and show the measure of validity which it possesses and then explain the limits of this validity. In general, it will not be a mere contrary of the other principle, but a new principle which includes more than either because it penetrates deeper than they do. Thus the moral particularism which makes the interests of one community the supreme standard of political action cannot be supplanted by the similar particularism of another community, but only by a view of the social principle in morality and of the value which belongs to particular communities in the social whole which is co-extensive with mankind[1].

In the preceding example we have been concerned with a conflict of ethical ideals, which was due not so much to difference in the nature or meaning of the ideals themselves, as to their different range of application; and a means for resolving this conflict was found in the test of comprehensiveness. Another example may serve to show that the same test will still be of value, even when

[1] It may be noted that the above paragraphs were written before the outbreak of war in 1914.

the conflict is not merely about the application of ethical ideals but concerns their fundamental nature. No difference of moral opinion can be greater than that which distinguishes the two views which may be described respectively as moral materialism and moral asceticism. By materialism in morals I mean the view that the most important things are those that affect the senses and that the highest values are to be found in the satisfaction of material wants. The view is not often expressed in serious argument, but it is frequently acted upon, and to adopt it involves a complete 'transvaluation of all values' which must dismiss as illusory the ideals which have tended to spiritualise human nature. The invalidity of this doctrine does not admit of direct demonstration; it is an ultimate point of view regarding the worth of things. But we may apply to it our previous test and ask, Can it be made finally coherent without disregarding essential facts? The answer to this question hardly admits of doubt. The view could be carried out systematically only by annulling or ignoring almost all the salient facts of moral appreciation: for these express a constant preference of the spiritual over the material or sensuous values.

On the other hand, the contrary doctrine of asceticism recognises the supreme importance of the spiritual values but sees in the whole material apparatus of life only obstacles to their realisation. In emphasising the values which moral materialism ignores, it condemns all the values which the latter admits. Thus this doctrine also is unable to give a coherent account of values without arbitrarily excluding certain factors. Further, in restricting all value to the spiritual factor, it falls itself

into inconsistency: for the spiritual life needs the support of a material basis, the assistance of material instruments. Systems of asceticism have sometimes admitted this. But they have commonly maintained that the body and all worldly things are simply a clog to the soul and that the only worthy life is a study of death; and in this way they have adopted a conclusion which cuts away the ground for holding that there is any positive worth in the world.

The test of comprehensiveness furnishes us with a clue whereby we may penetrate beneath this conflict of views. We may admit the estimate which the ascetic doctrine puts on spiritual values and yet, at the same time, find a place in our system of values for material goods. As spiritual activities require material instruments for their support and expression, the latter must at least have instrumental value; they cannot be merely obstacles to value; we must see in them the material through which values have to be realised, and we shall no longer be disinclined to assign them a place within the system of worth.

The criteria of universality, system, and comprehensiveness are not always capable of easy application: for our ethical knowledge, like our knowledge of causes and effects, is limited. But it may be doubted whether there is more uncertainty in the former than in the latter. In both, general knowledge is founded on particular or perceptive judgments, and the judgments of sense-perception need criticism and revision much in the same way as particular moral judgments do. Nor does the advance of science, any more than the advance of ethics, dispense with the occasional necessity for

criticising and discarding preliminary generalisations. Theories which at one time seemed firmly established, such as the Ptolemaic theory in astronomy, or the atomic theory which lasted from the time of Democritus almost to the present day, have given place to other theories which include a wider sweep, and a better understanding of each portion, of experience. The progress of moral ideas shows no greater transformation.

Throughout the history of moral ideas, in spite of constant change, we may nevertheless trace a certain persistent content. In each modification the new stage is not entirely new; it brings out more fully something that was already suggested at an earlier stage. It is a permanent characteristic of the moral consciousness to find value in certain kinds of experience rather than in other kinds. At every critical turn the moral judgment pronounces for the superiority of the spiritual to the material in life, and recognises the importance of social ends when confronted by the interests or apparent interests of the self-seeking individual. The higher life and the wider life—the life of spirit and the life for others—these the moral judgment approves with a constancy which is almost uniform. Perhaps it is entirely uniform. The valuation has indeed been rejected by individuals from time to time—as it was by Thrasymachus in the *Republic*, as it is at the present day by the followers of Nietzsche. But this rejection is not so much a different interpretation of the moral consciousness as a revolt against morality. It is a substitution of new values for old, like the magician's offer of new lamps for old in the Arabian tale. The new

lamps did not fulfil the same function as the old lamp; nor do the new values serve instead of the old. For, when we examine them, we find that they are only measurements of strength—physical standards, therefore—and not criteria of value or moral standards. In spite of the contrasts which we may discover between the ways in which different men and times express these values, their essential nature remains the same. They cannot be understood if we start by denying *in toto* the validity of the moral consciousness. And a sane criticism will find both unity of spirit and a principle of growth in its varied manifestations.

What is meaning of existence? | Sorley is not clear as to this.

1. Location in space-time relations. (scientific)
2. Distinguished in field of experience.
3. That which is datum in life.
4. That which expresses the dynamic relationship of experience thru fulfillment of its function
5. That which is reality in relation to which all ~~reality~~ particulars obtain meaning.

a. Reality in terms of meaning.
b. Degree of reality – "scale of value"

# V

## VALUE AND PERSONALITY

We have already seen that all judgments of value depend upon judgments or assumptions of existence. A thing does not need actual existence in order to be declared of value; but it must at least be assumed to exist. A hundred dollars—to use Kant's illustration in his criticism of the ontological argument—are of value, if they exist in the pocket but not if they are only an idea, something thought about. The proposition 'a hundred dollars are of value' means 'a hundred existing dollars are of value'; there is no value in the mere thought of a hundred dollars. The same holds when the thing of which we are speaking is of intrinsic value and not merely something of instrumental value, like the hundred dollars. Moral perfection is of value, of supreme value; but the mere concept 'moral perfection,' apart from any actual realisation of it or approximation to it, is not of value. When we examine it strictly, therefore, the proposition 'moral perfection is of value' is hypothetical—moral perfection, if realised, is valuable; or it proceeds on an assumption or presumption of existence: in so far as moral perfection is realised, just so far is there value. The predication of value thus implies or assumes something existing which can be said to possess the value; the true bearer of value is an existent or something conceived as existing.

Were there no existence there would be no value; value out of relation to existence has no meaning.

Thus, on analysis, we find that the subject or bearer of value is always something which we describe by a concrete term and not by an abstract term. If a general term is used, as when we say, 'money has value' or 'love has value,' the general term denotes a class of objects: actual coin, for instance, or all those actually and possibly existing states of conscious experience to which we refer when we use the term 'love.' That to which we ascribe value is accordingly a singular or group of singulars—an individual being or a combination or series of things which exists or is contemplated as possibly existing.

This does not make the determination of value possible apart from universals. Universals, as we have seen, are required in order to understand the nature of the individual things in which we are interested in the quest for value. There are also, in the theory of value itself, many propositions of purely universal import. The distinction of the various kinds of value, and of the relations of values to one another, when combined or opposed, may all be set forth in universal propositions; and they may make up a formal theory of value, which shares the generality of scientific theory. This formal theory, by its generality, belongs to the region of abstraction. It deals with value and the relations of values apart from the things in which value is found and through which only it is realised. But we get at that value only in connexion with the individual, with something that exists or is assumed as existing. The predicate 'good' has always an existent or possible existent for its subject. We cannot even say 'good is

good.' That would be true only as a mere tautology, and of use for the purpose of emphasis only, but not of information. The mere concept 'good' is not itself good—it has no value. Accordingly it is only when our business is with the individual, and not where our interest centres in the universal, that the consideration of value enters at all. And thus we come to see how the value-conception and the whole train of thought which is connected with it are at once so insistent in our experience (which is of individuals) and yet alien to the procedure and ideas of the physical sciences (which deal with universals).

Our intellectual interests fall into two distinct classes according as they are centred in the universal or in the individual. In the whole region of what is commonly called the sciences the interest in the universal is supreme[1]. What we are in search of is general principles or general laws. The ideal of all the sciences is a statement in the form of a mathematical equation, perfectly general in its expression. Things are 'explained' when they can be expressed by this formula; and individual things are treated as examples of the general principle. The scientific interest in the individual processes of nature or of the laboratory is to find the law of their action; and this law is a universal which covers equally an indefinite number of processes. No one of these processes interests us on its own account so long as we keep to the point of view of the physical and natural sciences. Any one process is as interesting as any other, and its interest depends upon the general principle which it illustrates. The fall of an apple and the orbit of the

[1] Cp. H. Rickert, *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft*, 2nd edit. (1910).

earth are illustrations of the law of gravitation; and as such are of equal interest from the point of view of natural science. Here nothing is unique; repetition shows the law which we aim at formulating. Things and processes are not regarded as individuals or as interesting for their individuality—for what distinguishes them from everything else—but for what they have in common with other things or processes. The uniformity of nature is the supreme principle, and individuals are but examples which prove the law or cases which illustrate its operation.

As long as we keep to this scientific interest thoughts of value do not arise. The pleasure of the quest, the splendour and havoc of the earth, the worth of human life, are all of them considerations which divert the understanding from the purpose of natural science and are irrelevant to its enquiry. The reason why the natural sciences ignore the whole region of values is a good and sufficient reason. Value lies outside their scope because they are concerned with the universal and not with the individual, and the latter is the home of value.

But intellectual interest is not restricted to the universal. That restriction is the characteristic of the physical and natural sciences. And there is a region of investigation where the interest terminates in the understanding of the individual. In biography it is the life of a particular human being, in history the life of a nation or the stages in the progress of some movement. In these cases the individual is the object of interest, and the universals which we use in the enquiry are merely means towards a true understanding of it. Without universals there would be no knowledge of the indi-

vidual, just as, on the other hand, there would be no natural science unless there were individual things to suggest and to verify the enquiry for general laws. But, although we must describe the individual by means of general terms, each of which by its generality is equally and indifferently applicable to an indefinite number of other things, yet by and through these universals we seek to comprehend something which is unique, or has happened once for all. The historical person or occurrence is not regarded as a mere type or as an example of a general principle, but as something whose character as it existed there and then is matter of interest to us, and open to our understanding.

Into this historical process values may and do enter. In this respect also historical study differs from natural science; and the difference is due to the different objects —individual and universal—to which they are directed. Neither biography nor history is intelligible without reference to the values which guided the action of individuals or of groups. The deciding feature of a career is commonly the kind of values which appeal to the subject of the career, the degrees of force with which they appeal to him, and his consistency and persistency in their pursuit. It is the same with races and nations; the national life shows unity and purpose not so much by wealth or power being possessed by the people or equally distributed among them, as by a community of interest such that the same values appeal to all. The object valued may be economic prosperity, or military power, or religious belief; and one value may be higher or purer in the judgment of the moralist; but whatever it is, if it is shared by the great mass of the people, they

are united as a nation thereby far more than by mere purity of race or identity of language. Thus, when we are dealing with the individual or community of individuals, we ask questions which natural science rightly looks upon as irrelevant for its purposes. We ask, On what did the man set his heart? What were the national aims? What was the end or purpose of the movement? Value belongs here, whereas for scientific enquiry the universal law or principle is the only concern, and into it value does not enter.

It is therefore in the existent, the individual, that value is found, not in the general or universal. Now the individual is always unique. How this comes about is not the question: the fact is so. No event repeats another exactly; as was said of old, "no one descends twice into the same stream." And no two individual persons or things are quite alike in all their characters, as Leibniz demonstrated to the gentlemen of the Prussian court when he bade them seek in the gardens of Charlottenburg for two blades of grass without conspicuous differences between them. Heterogeneity in this sense is the mark of nature. Science has the problem set to it of overcoming this heterogeneity by finding general laws which hold true in spite of individual differences; and for this purpose it must disregard the peculiarities which distinguish any individual thing from every other and make it unique.

As value belongs to the existent or individual, and as the individual is unique, we tend to think of uniqueness as essential to value. In the class of instrumental values dealt with in economics, rarity contributes to the

increase of value; and when any object of value is not merely rare but a unique specimen of its kind and nothing else can supply its place, its value may be indefinitely enhanced. This estimate extends to intrinsic values also as realised in persons. A man prizes his own individuality and resents any confusion with another self. "Very nice young ladies they both are," said Admiral Croft, "I hardly know one from the other"; but the young ladies would have resented this divided praise. 'Doubles' usually feel antagonistic to one another. When he is regarded simply as one of a class, as a specimen, a man feels himself robbed of his value; and he therefore sets store by everything which gives him a character of his own and marks him off from the rest of the world. Repetition too is distasteful to him, because this also is a generalising of what he esteems as existing once for all. For this reason the doctrine has never been accepted gladly that life is a recurrence of cycles, and that with the completion of the great year the whole world's history and the lives of the men who make up that history will run once more the course which they have already run and are running now. Value seems to us to be lost if the 'second turn' is a mere reduplication of the first. Who, indeed, would wish to live his life over again if everything were to be repeated exactly as it was before, and he were to gain nothing from the present adventure? When you repeat you generalise, and when you generalise you devaluate. The heartless words "She is not the first[1]" are an excuse for evil put into the mouth of Mephistopheles.

[1] Quoted in this connexion in Windelband's address 'Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft,' *Präludien*, 3rd edit., p. 374.

This view represents a very common attitude of mind: an evil thing seems to lose its badness if it is common; a good is enhanced in value by the rarity of its attainment. Yet I think that the opinion is a mistaken one and that it is based upon a misunderstanding of the true ground for the individuality of value. Evil is not less evil because the like has happened before, any more than your present toothache is less painful because you had one yesterday. It is because Mephistopheles was a sophist that he tried to quiet Faust's conscience with the words "She is not the first"—only an example of a general rule. An event is not less real because there have been other similar events and we may make certain general propositions which are valid for them all. Each is yet a true individual event. We may choose to consider that or anything else as a mere example of a universal; but its individuality remains and would remain, even if there were (as there never is) some other event exactly like it. The individual is indeed unique; but it is because it is an individual, not because it differs in some points from every other thing, that it is capable of being the bearer of value. Again, it is true that a mere repetition of the present life would seem to us to take away from its value; but that is because it takes away from its meaning—or at least from the meaning which for the most part we find in it. If we have to begin all over again just to reach a point already attained, we lose this meaning, which lies in the promise of an attainment in character or in ability which does not pass away with the moment; and we therefore lose value; for the value of life consists not merely in present achievement but in the fulfilment of

purpose—not in mere doing or in present being, but in making something which will not be unmade, so that things will never again come to be as if the present had not been. If it were not for this view of the whole, which is always implied in our estimate of the value of life, if the value of the stretch of life which we can observe were to be estimated simply for and by itself, then this value would not be affected by the fact that somewhere and in some distant age the cycle would begin anew. It is not because our life is a once-for-all that can never be repeated, but because it is an individual life, that it possesses or can possess value. Repetition is abhorrent to us because it implies the transitoriness of attainment, the impermanence of progress, the illusoriness of the promise of perfection[1]. But, apart from this, things and persons do not lose in value because their like may be found elsewhere or at other times. Given existence, value is always possible; it attaches itself to uniqueness only because it is the individual that exists and the individual is always unique.

So far, the result is that value does not belong to a mere quality or relation or any other universal. A quality or relation or some other universal may be a condition of the presence of value; but value postulates the existence of something valuable. We must now go on to ask the question, Among the class of existents what members are or may be the bearers of value?

In order to decide this question, it will not be necessary to go much beyond the obvious and *prima facie* distinction of existing beings. On the one hand

[1] Cp. Bosanquet, *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 182.

there are mere things; on the other hand persons. Perhaps both do not exist in the same way; but it is enough that both are there, the objects of reflexion and possible claimants of value. Nor is the classification exhaustive. It does not ask how we are to deal with the existence of human societies. And it says nothing of the whole animate world apart from man, which cannot rightly be grouped with the inorganic realm as mere things, nor yet assumed to share the personality of man. This intermediate region causes difficulties of its own, when we come to assign values; indeed, difficulty rather than safety always lies in the intermediate; and that difficulty can only be overcome by first understanding what holds true of the extremes.

Does value then belong to the mere thing, that is, to things which are not persons? To this question the first answer of common sense is that it does. The interest of the world seems to consist just in the varying values of the things which it comprises. Some things are beautiful, others ugly, some things good, others evil; and it is for us to make selection between them, and by our activity to add to the goodness and beauty of the world. But when we examine more closely this first answer of common sense, we see that the values which it finds in mere things are—at any rate the great mass of them are—merely instrumental values. What we call the 'goods' of the world are appraised in relation to persons—by ministering to their desires, furthering their ideals, or offering scope for their activities. The fruits of the earth are called good if they nourish man or satisfy any human wants; the forces of nature, the arrangement and order of the

world, are valued for their effects on the lives of persons —for the personal and social qualities and conditions which they encourage and foster. Man makes the world his instrument, and seeks in it the means for promoting a human good. These values, therefore, are strictly instrumental values; and instrumental values—real and necessary as they are—are not in themselves values but only instruments of value or means for its attainment. They are the conditions by which intrinsic values are realised; and these latter, it would appear, are found only in personal life.

But is it only of persons, or of things in relation to personal life, that intrinsic value can be predicated? Is it not possible for material things to have a value of their own apart from beings who are able to appreciate that value? The question could not be fully answered without asking another question, What sort of reality belongs to material things out of all relation to consciousness? and this is a question which it is not desirable to raise at the present moment. If we must content ourselves, then, with a less complete answer to the question, it may be admitted that the case is not so clear in respect of æsthetic values as it is in respect of moral values. As regards the former, the question need hardly arise concerning works of art. It is true, as has been said before, that for their appreciation it is not necessary to go behind the work itself and to ask what kind of a man the artist was or what the motive was that guided his work. But nevertheless it is as a product of mind that the statue or the picture or the poem is admired or valued; it clothes an idea in sensuous material; and, in its perfection, spirit breathes through

the material. But it is more difficult to make and to defend the same statement regarding the beauties of nature. No thought of a divine artist is necessary for their appreciation. Their beauty is there for the seeing eye; and even if the eye is blind to the vision, the beauty (it may be said) remains and only needs the gift of sight on the part of the observer that it may be appreciated. So at least it has been held[1]; and, from our present point of view, little more can be done than appeal to immediate consciousness. Let us, if we can, suppose conscious factors of every kind to be absent and yet nature somehow to exist. What is that which we call its beauty, when there is no mind expressed in it and no eye to admire it? Can we say more that there would be a certain arrangement of forms and colours? We who see it admire it as beautiful, and we call some other arrangement ugly. But if mind were completely extruded would there be any ground for attributing greater worth or value to the one order than to the other? If it did not express a mind, or any idea such as mind forms and imposes upon the world, and if, at the same time, there were no observing mind whose admiration might heighten its own worth, would there be any beauty, any value, in the assortment of material particles that is supposed to remain? We bring mind upon the scene when we say that this particular order would have been worth producing or that it would be rightly admired; and, unless this can be said, the arrangements of light and shade, of colour and form, are not themselves values, but only certain of the conditions which contribute to there being value.

But, whatever doubt may be felt regarding the

[1] G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, pp. 83 f.

æsthetic values, the point seems clear with regard to moral values—the values with which we are more specially concerned. Goodness—when we distinguish it from beauty and from truth—does not belong to material things, but to persons only. As Hume says in criticising the doctrine of moral relations found in Locke and developed further by Clarke and Wollaston, "Inanimate objects may bear to each other all the same relations which we observe in moral agents. . . . A young tree which over-tops and destroys its parent, stands in all the same relations with Nero, when he murdered Agrippina; and if morality consisted merely in relations, would no doubt be equally criminal[1]." The inference which Hume draws is that moral quality does not belong to the object at all, but to the state of mind which the circumstances produce in the observer. Nero's action produces hatred in those who read of it; the matricidal growth of the young tree does not: hence the one action is wicked, the other is not. The explanation is insufficient; it refers to the difference of subjective reaction in the two cases, but it does not show why it is that the subject reacts differently. The true explanation must go back to this cause, which indeed is not hard to find. We are affected differently because the objects are different, because in the one case we observe the operations of natural forces only and in the other we see the conscious and voluntary action of a person.

The widespread but unreflective application of moral predicates—of 'good' and 'bad'—to the operations of

[1] Hume, *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, app. i, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 293; *Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 264.

mere things is due to neglect or ignorance of this difference; and it is really a survival of the primitive animism which attributed to material things a life and mind similar to those of man. Without this support, it is seen to be without ground in the reason of things. Once the physical connexion of events is clearly apprehended, the causal judgment supplants the moral. It does not, indeed, interfere with the judgment of instrumental value, for that is strictly a causal judgment; but it puts out of court the judgment of intrinsic moral value, which only found admission before because things were not accurately distinguished from persons.

There is one case of the judgment of value, however, which remains and which applies moral predicates to things; and that is when nature as a whole is spoken of, and the optimist exclaims 'how good the world is!' or the pessimist says 'how bad!' These judgments, no doubt, often refer as much to the persons in the world as to their natural environment. But the latter is included in the judgment. The hedonist may approve the course of nature as the source of pleasures, or condemn it for the surplus of pain it brings; others, who are not given over to hedonism in their estimate of values, may applaud the order of the world as understood by the human mind or deplore the perplexities which make it unintelligible, or in other ways they may praise or disparage. Sometimes these judgments are little more than a reflexion of the subjective mood of the observer, who describes his own attitude rather than the characteristics of reality. Yet it must be admitted that they are often more than this: the observer's gaze is turned outward not inward, and he sees the world as

objectively good or bad. In so judging it, however, he is not thinking of its material aspects alone. The world to which he refers is the environment in which persons live and in which they seek a response to their desires or ideals. If it seems to respond favourably to the demands made upon it, it is called good; if, on the other hand, it seems to entail misery or to lead to confusion of thought or failure of purpose, as it does in the eyes of the pessimist, then it is called evil. In both cases the moral judgment is passed upon it because of its effect upon persons and their lives; it is because it defeats their desire for happiness, or their attainment of their ideals, that it is condemned, and because it furthers these that it is approved. In either case it is judged good or bad as an instrument towards personal ends, and the real or intrinsic goodness which it is praised for aiding, or blamed for thwarting, is the good or value of the persons whose fortunes are made or marred by this environment.

The value-judgments upon nature or the world of inanimate things are thus properly judgments of instrumental value, not judgments of intrinsic value. But their instrumental character is sometimes overlooked by optimistic writers and still more often by the pessimist. The famous indictment of the order of nature, which is found in J. S. Mill's essay on Nature, is a case in point. "Nature," he says[1], "impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christian martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by

[1] J. S. Mill, *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 29.

the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabi or a Domitian never surpassed. All this, Nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice." In this judgment—and there are pages of similar moral denunciation—the reference to the happiness of persons is obvious and intentional. But to probe the causes of unhappiness or misfortune does not justify a moral condemnation of these causes if there was no purpose behind them. It is because Mill personifies nature that he allows himself to use the language of moral denunciation; or because he is arguing against the view that the order of nature is the result of an omnipotent benevolent will. The moral judgment upon nature—whether it be a judgment of approval or of disapproval—becomes appropriate when nature is contemplated as the work of a supreme being or person: and it is only when nature is thus contemplated that the judgment is in place. It is to persons, therefore, and not to mere things that the moral predicate can apply[1].

Problem evil.

But, while the subject or bearer of value is always found to be in the last resort personality, the living conscious being and not the inanimate thing, it is equally true that the thing may be essential for the realisation of the value of which the conscious person is capable. The world is the environment of personal life; ideals have to be realised by making it their instrument;

[1] Cp. T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 184: "Our ultimate standard of worth is an ideal of *personal* worth. All other values are relative to values for, of, or in a person."

mind must infuse itself into the mass that the goodness which it conceives may become actual.

From this point of view history in the widest sense may be looked upon as the gradual process of the spiritualisation of matter; we shall see in it the successive steps by which mind gains the lead and things become contributory to values. At the beginning, throughout the whole course of inorganic evolution, we can trace causal connexions only; on the level where we ourselves stand we find men acting with more or less clear consciousness of ideals, finding and producing values. Of the intermediate stages—among the lower or sub-human forms of life—it is more difficult to say with certainty whether intrinsic or independent values are to be found. All degrees of life and mentality are there, short of the human. But we can form little idea of their nature. All we can do towards interpreting the behaviour of animals depends upon a comparison of that behaviour with human conduct, and then an uncertain inference by analogy. We subtract something from the life of mind as we know it, and attribute the remainder, or aspects of it, to the different species of animals, in proportion as they approach man biologically.

We must distinguish two things: value and the consciousness of value. They do not necessarily go together. Health is of value to a man; but if he is healthy he thinks little about his health, is hardly conscious of it at all. Similarly, the wise or just man is not the man most conscious of his wisdom or justice. These values are often most clearly apparent to the observer, when their possessor has hardly any consciousness of them himself or may modestly but sincerely

disclaim them. Now to the sub-human consciousness we can hardly ascribe any consciousness of value; but that will not be a reason for denying the presence of value. The value may still be there, though unrecognised by its possessor. "The animal," says Varisco[1], "cooperates without knowing it to develop life, to increase its value—that is, to render possible to other animals which will come after the realisation of higher values." But this does not make its values merely instrumental for that more developed life. Human values also are preparatory for a higher range of attainment. As Varisco says in the same connexion, "life develops itself towards an end which is not in the consciousness of any one individual subject, but which goes on realising itself—by means of the conscious aims of the individual subjects." The values which are prophetic of the future may be of intrinsic worth in their present realisation, even when realised on the level of the animal consciousness. The animal has a life of its own; it is for itself; and in this life and what furthers it value may lie. On the other hand, these values can only be such as we count low on the scale, and can involve little, if anything, more than biological preservation and its attendant feeling. For all those values which we count higher, consciousness is needed of a kind and degree which can hardly be attributed to the animals. They are not mere things, as Kant held they were; they have a life and values of their own; but their life is from moment to moment, probably without clear recollection of the past or anticipation of the future. There are few traces of the existence of 'free ideas' in

[1] Varisco, *The Great Problems*, Engl. transl., p. 152.

their mental process; there is no evidence for their possession of ideals; and the possession of ideals is a condition of the production of the higher values. For all these higher values, consciousness is necessary—not a consciousness of possessing them, perhaps; but a consciousness of the kind of objects and activities which contribute to them. Wisdom, for instance, does not involve, on the wise man's part, a consciousness that he is wise; but it does involve a highly developed intelligence. The whole question of the existence of values in sub-human life must therefore be left without exact determination. They are on the line of potentiality, or of approximation, rather than of actual attainment. The individual centre of life, which is the ground of being-for-oneself, is there and makes the realisation of value a possibility, though the values actually realised may be subordinate and few: but they increase in number and worth as the life approaches the full characteristics of personality.

Human nature also displays many different grades of value and of capacity for the realisation of value. Different ages, different races, different social and intellectual conditions carry with them differences in value. The values appropriate to youth or middle life are not identical with those of childhood or old age; primitive man finds values in activities and enjoyments which seem of little account in the estimate of an intellectual civilisation; and differences of a similar kind cling to our distinctions of class and profession. We cannot get to the unity of value—even of moral value—by a process of abstraction from these differences. If we eliminate

everything that belongs to a particular age or race or condition, what is left will be too vague and indefinite to constitute a worthy ideal for human personality. The spirit of morality cannot be found apart from its embodiment, but the same spirit may clothe itself in many forms.

Nor is it allowable to select one special form as our standard and to treat all other forms as ancillary or instrumental thereto. If we did, would not each select his own age, his own race, his own status as the normal, and regard all others as merely means or approximations to this standard? The category of means and end is always inadequate for the interpretation of personal worth. Carried out in all its narrow completeness it has led to the subjection of race to race and given us the institution of slavery; it has subordinated class to class and invented the conception of the proletariate; it has looked upon infancy and youth as without value in themselves and only stages towards manhood, and it has clouded the joy of childhood in more than one generation. It is but an exaggeration of the same view to look upon each stage and moment of life as worthless in itself and as only a means of getting on to the next, which again is treated as a means to a later achievement, until all life is emptied of intrinsic value. It would be strange indeed, as Kant admits[1], if the toil and glory of past generations and of the present were without worth of their own and derived all their value from their contribution to an achievement still in the distant future.

Intrinsic value should not be denied to any period or to any condition in the life either of the individual

[1] *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*, prop. 3, *Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, vol. IV, p. 146.

or of the race. Each moment even may have its own value[1]. And yet that value is never altogether independent; one moment is not a mere means to the next, but its value is connected systematically or organically with that of other moments in the individual life; and the individual life, in its value as well as in its causes and effects, is connected with the life of the race. The connexion is not merely instrumental; it is organic or systematic. Nature and the laws of nature are instruments for the realisation of values; in personal life the values are realised. But it is only a fragmentary value that is realised at any moment; its meaning and worth depend upon the purpose of the individual life to which it belongs. And the individual life itself and its values are also themselves fragmentary, portions of a still larger whole. Of this larger whole social institutions and the various forms of community are imperfect expressions. Among these communities stands the Church whose life should be consecrated to the service of the higher values, inspiring and organising the purposes and efforts of individuals. It may be taken, in its idea, as representing the organised system into which these values and attainments of value enter. Only in relation to such a system could the full meaning and full worth of the individual life and its values be understood.

I have spoken of the person as the bearer of value; and I have been content to use the word personality in its popular sense, confident in agreement as to its denotation, whatever difficulty there may be in its definition. But the question may be raised, Is it only to the indi-

[1] W. Dilthey, 'Das Wesen der Philosophie,' *Kultur der Gegenwart*, part 1, div. vi, p. 33.

vidual person—the subject of an inner life of thought emotion and will—that value belongs? or does it not also belong to the community of persons—a society or the State—although we cannot attribute to this community an inner life of its own similar and in addition to the inner lives of its various members?

This distinction has to be kept in mind if we speak of the value of a community of persons and not merely of individuals. The community has not a feeling or apprehension of this value over and above the feelings and apprehensions of it which belong to its members. Nor can we even say that it has a value separate from the value of the members. That value is shared in and realised by the members—though by them only as forming the community. In the interest of clear thinking, and to avoid a misplaced mysticism, this much, I think, must be allowed. If we speak of the common consciousness, or general will, or spirit of the time, we must remember that these phrases do not denote a consciousness will or spirit which has an existence apart from and parallel to the minds of individual men. The social mind is realised and real in individual minds and nowhere else.

But this is only one side of the truth. If society is unreal apart from the individual, it is also true that each individual mind is dependent upon the minds of others. It is impossible to point to any fragment of the individual's mental content which does not imply, or which is independent of, the intercourse of mind with mind. There remains, indeed, as his own the unity which makes each mind a separate centre of conscious life; but even this unity would remain imperfect—indeed, no more than a mere possibility—if it were

not fixed and defined by opposition and relation to the similar mental unity of others. It is impossible to say even that a man is conscious of his own life as a unity of many factors before he is conscious of similar selves with whom his own self can be contrasted. It is not good for man to be alone. It is not possible for him really to be alone. Solitude is an artificial condition which only society makes possible. Into the solitary state the hermit carries a crowd of social memories and an idea of his own independent self which is really a social construction. When we speak of self and society, therefore, we are not speaking of two independent existents. Personality has been held to be the bearer of value; but personality itself is a social category: it indicates not merely the individual unity of life and consciousness, but also the social place and function which belong to the person and without which he could not be what he is.

The phrase 'the social mind' is not a mere metaphor. But the unity of the social mind is of a different kind from the unity of the individual mind. The limits of the latter are determined by circumstances which are largely social; but the content is all related to a central point, an inner or subjective unity of feeling striving and apprehension, which is the first condition of there being any mental life at all, and which neither psychology nor sociology has been able to explain. With the social mind it is different. Its unity is a result which can be traced historically. Social factors must always be assumed; but social unity is a growth in time, and it does not start from a principle such as the subject of individual life, without which the existence of his mental experience is inconceivable.

Thus we find a variety of degrees of social unity, from the almost haphazard collection of individuals to the definite forms of a business company, or a trade-union, or the modern State. Their unity is in the making; and, such as it is, it is determined, not by mere numbers or by common situation, but—if it is a society at all—by community of purpose. It has to create its own organs to carry out its purposes; it is seldom able to act with the decision and directness of an individual person; but it does achieve a measure of unity through its purpose and by producing an organisation adequate to its purpose. It has thus to select means and end, and it can be guided by ideals. The kind of unity which it attains is, therefore, primarily ethical rather than psychical. The State—and the same may be said of any community—is a subject of rights and duties. These rights and duties are not the rights and duties of its individual members but of the community itself: even although it be necessary for the community to appoint certain of its number to be its agents in securing and fulfilling them.

Seeing that these rights and duties are, in strictness, the rights and duties of the society, and not merely of the members of the society, we must allow that the society is or can be a subject of moral value. Moral value is attained by it in fulfilling its duties and in performing its function in accordance with its rights; and there are human values which can be realised only in and by the society: which in this sense—if in this sense only—must be regarded as a person and a bearer of value.

# VI

## RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE VALUE

THE most fundamental of all ethical controversies arises out of the claim to objective validity made in the moral judgment. That judgment asserts that something is good; and, in justifying this assertion, moralists have sought for some final conception upon which all particular goods may be seen to depend—a chief good, or ultimate end, or categorical imperative. On the other hand, moralists of a different school have held that the quest of an absolute must necessarily be fruitless in the domain of morals: that good means good for something or someone—that it is by its very nature a relative conception to which objective validity is assigned only by a mistake or by a convention of strictly limited validity.

The conception of value, which connects ethical with æsthetic ideas, has perhaps had some influence in confirming the tendency to a relativist interpretation of goodness. But it was introduced into ethics by Herbart with a different purpose in view. He, indeed, identified ethics with æsthetics, holding that all "value-determinations are æsthetic judgments[1]"; but he also held that these value-determinations are something simple, original, and independent[2], and that they are unmixed

[1] J. F. Herbart, *Analytische Beleuchtung des Naturrechts und der Moral*, pref., *Werke* (1851), vol. VIII, p. 216.

[2] *Allgemeine praktische Philosophie*, introd. § 1, *Werke*, vol. VIII, p. 24.

with any feeling of pleasure or displeasure or with any desire[1]. This view has been rejected by the most prominent contemporary exponents of the theory of value. "Every value," said Meinong in his early work[2], "must be value for a subject"; and v. Ehrenfels is even more emphatic: "Each single value exists only for a definite subject—strictly speaking, for a definite subject at a definite time[3]"; and again, "We do not desire things because we recognise this mystical incomprehensible essence 'value' in them, but we ascribe value to things because we desire them[4]." In this sentence goodness and, generally, value are made relative to individual desire, just as Meinong had previously made them relative to pleasure and displeasure; and both views—though in conflict with one another—are at one in opposing the doctrine of an absolute or even a genuinely objective value. To examine all the arguments on both sides of the question is not possible in this place. But the previous discussion has prepared the way for a critical summary of the state of the case.

In the theory of morality, as in the theory of knowledge, the term 'relative' is used in two different significations. It may mean relative to the subject who pronounces the judgment whether of value or of fact. Or the relation implied may be to other objective elements, recognition of which is required to give validity to the judgment. According to the former signification the doctrine of relativity means, in the theory of knowledge, that the object of knowledge is

[1] *Analytische Beleuchtung*, pref., *Werke*, vol. VIII, p. 217.
[2] *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie*, p. 27.
[3] *System der Werttheorie*, vol. I, p. 66. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

either simply a state of the knower's mind, or else that it is coloured and modified by his subjective forms of perceiving and understanding. And in ethics it means that, when the moral judgment is strictly interpreted, its predicate signifies a state of the subject who passes the judgment, and not a character or predicate of an object independent of that subject.

This doctrine of ethical relativity or ethical subjectivity has already been examined, and little need be added here. But this much may be repeated. The appreciation of value is on the same level as knowledge of things, their qualities and relations. We have no more reason for saying that value is relative because it is appreciated by us than we have for saying that facts are relative because they are apprehended by us. If we take any particular moral judgment, as that this man, or this character, or this attitude is good—let us call it 'A is good'—then what I mean when I assert 'A is good' is not that I like or desire A or even that I feel approval in contemplating A, but that this predicate 'good' does, as a matter of fact, characterise A. The assertion may be wrong or invalid; but that is its meaning. It is certainly possible to argue that this assertion, thus understood, and all assertions like it, must always be without objective foundation, that they are always based merely on subjective preference. But, if this line of argument be adopted, it is important to remember that it is on all-fours with the argument for the subjectivity of knowledge—with Hume's argument that there is no objective connexion in nature, and that, when we say or think there is, we are simply misunderstanding the subjective routine of our perceptions. In both cases the

question in debate is fundamental, for it involves the interpretation of primary experience. If we say with Hume that 'A is good' means simply that the contemplation of A gives me a pleasing sentiment of approbation, then undoubtedly we cut at the root of an objective theory of morality. And, equally, if we say with Hume that the proposition 'fire causes heat' expresses, properly speaking, nothing more than a connexion of ideas in my mind, due to association, then we must with him deny the objective character of natural science. And the denial of an objective morality, equally with the denial of an objective science of nature, follows from the rejection of the plain meaning of the primary judgments of experience.

Subjective knowledge of this sort is no knowledge at all, for it defeats the purpose of knowledge, which is to understand the world—not to understand our understanding. And subjective morality gives no moral knowledge. For, if the meaning of the proposition 'A is good' is simply that the person who asserts it has pleasure in contemplating A, it will be possible at the same time for another person, who has displeasure in contemplating A, to say with equal truth 'A is not good.' That is to say, the same proposition 'A is good' will be true in one man's mouth and false in another's: in other words, there will be no such thing as moral truth.

If this position be adopted I know of no logical grounds for its refutation. It would indeed be hard to find such where the axiom of non-contradiction itself is plainly disregarded. The assertion of relativity, in the sense of subjectivity, has equal effects upon know-

ledge whether fact or goodness be our object; and it results in both cases from an interpretation of primary experience which is opposed to the plain meaning of the propositions which express that experience.

The main cause which has led to the assertion of moral relativity or subjectivity seems to me to be the variety of moral judgments and the contrariety between the judgments of different persons. A man is indeed inclined to approve what he likes, as well as to like what he approves. Belief or judgment is frequently and markedly deflected by the emotions: though the degree in which it is 'passional' or emotional has been exaggerated in the interests of a theory. For few men succeed in believing even a tithe of what they wish to believe: else every man would think himself wise and fortunate, handsome and brave. Objective reality is too much for him, and, much as he wishes, he cannot believe it markedly different from what it is. And it is to the objective that he refers in his judgment even when his imperfect information or the strength of his passions makes him judge amiss. It is true that the diversity of moral opinion has encouraged—perhaps led to—the doctrine that all moral judgments are relative in the sense of subjective. But there is a similar diversity in judgments, even scientific judgments, about the actual course of things. Are we to say that this diversity also makes all such judgments subjective? For instance, in the years following the death of Copernicus, and even after the work of Kepler, there was much diversity of opinion on the question whether the earth was the centre of the physical universe or a planet revolving round the sun. This diversity was enough

to make ordinary people doubt which proposition more accurately described the constitution of the solar system, regarded as an isolated object; but it was not enough to justify the assertion that his own belief was true for each man—unless we are willing to admit that, before the time of Copernicus, the sun went round the earth and that, some time after his day, a change came about and the earth began to go round the sun. Similarly, there has been great diversity of moral opinion regarding such topics as the burning of widows, and the killing of useless old men or of superfluous female infants; and, at certain times opinion has differed as to the morality of such customs generally or of particular instances of them. But it does not follow that the two moral judgments 'this is right' and 'this is wrong' could both of them have been correct—that the very same act can have been both right and wrong.

But circumstances alter cases, it may be said, and what was right under one set of conditions may be wrong under another set of conditions. This however is to change the question in dispute. When we put the matter in this way, we are no longer referring to one individual instance, but to a general class of actions. The killing of Caesar, for instance, and the killing of Commodus may be both cases which can be described by the general term tyrannicide; but the moral quality of the two deeds need not therefore be the same. We must take all relevant circumstances into account for each moral judgment. And this is what we mean when we say that circumstances alter cases. We are no longer asserting that moral value is relative in the sense of subjective; but that it depends, or may depend, upon

In this first point he treats morality only in the sense of caprice.

surrounding conditions. That is to say, we are passing from the first meaning of relative to the second. And, indeed, the two meanings are frequently confused when morality is said to be relative.

This second meaning of relativity does not imply dependence of the object upon the subject observing it; it asserts relation between this particular object and other factors of the objective whole. If we use the term in this sense, relativity will no longer imply any divorce from reality, and we shall have to interpret differently the assertion that morality is relative.

1. In the first place, as we have already discovered, moral value always belongs to an existing reality or to something conceived as existing. 'Good' is not something that can stand alone or can be assigned as a predicate to some other quality, unless that quality be conceived as existing and therefore as belonging to a concrete whole. When I say 'love is good' or 'justice is good,' I mean that love as realised in a personal life is good, that justice as manifested in a man's character or in a social order is good. I do not mean that the mere abstract quality love or justice is also good. Good cannot be predicated of the abstract. It belongs only to the concrete—as I have already argued, to persons.

This position is fundamental as marking the distinction of ethics from the formal and abstract sciences. A mathematical proposition holds true without any postulate or hypothesis about existence. We do not need to assume the existence of triangles in order to make the assertion that the plane triangle encloses two right angles. The plane triangle is an entity indepen-

dent of actual existence; and equality of enclosed angles to two right angles is a property of this entity. But it is different with the qualities to which we attribute moral value. If I form the abstract concept justice, and treat this concept as an entity with a subsistence of its own apart from its realisation in existence, then it does not hold of this entity that it is good. What is good is the just deed or just man or just social order.

The view maintained here is opposed to the form of idealism which regards such ideas as just, good, beautiful, etc., as alone truly real, and looks upon their manifestation in the concrete—in life and action—as unessential or as only a problem troublesome of solution. It is also opposed to the theories of ethics, cognate to this doctrine, which treat justice or love or freedom or pleasure as self-subsistent entities, now combined with existence now separated from it, but capable of possessing the quality good or bad quite irrespective of any such connexion. It seems to me that this doctrine proceeds upon a misinterpretation of moral experience and of value-experience generally. When it is made clear to us that by justice, love, pleasure, etc., simple qualities are meant regardless of their presence in any consciousness, the moral consciousness refuses to call them good or evil. When good or evil is ascribed to them in this way, I suspect that this is due to an oversight—oversight of the reference to existence always implied in the moral judgment. We deal familiarly with abstractions, forgetful of the reference to concrete reality which they always imply when moral predicates are assigned to them.

In this sense, therefore, we may assert relativity of moral value. Whatever is held to be good is not a

mere quality, but a concrete realisation of this quality. But, in this meaning of the term, relativity does not, as it did in the former meaning, imply any severance from reality. On the contrary it affirms connexion with reality. The quality called good is good only when it stands in such relation to a concrete whole as to form part of, or to be a factor in, that whole. Goodness (and value generally) belongs to reality, or at least to things contemplated as real.

2. Further, and in the second place, there is another point of view from which morality may be looked upon as relative, without that relativity interfering with its objective character. The thing of value—the person called good—lives in an environment, physical and social. He is called good in virtue of some qualities or characteristics which he possesses or which constitute his nature. And, seeing that he is a living being, these qualities or characteristics are manifested in the way in which he reacts upon his environment. It is generally owing to his special modes of reaction that he merits and that he receives the title good. If the environment were different, the same attitude to it might not merit the same title. It might lose its moral value through being unfitted to the conditions of his life. Here also, then, is relativity. The good is not out of relation to the environment of the person or attitude called good. And this, indeed, follows from the preceding position. It is the concrete person who can be said to be good; and no person stands alone and unchanging. He is a centre of life and consciousness; and his conscious life requires an objective environment which he must know and modify; to live is to react upon and thus to change

external surroundings. To understand the individual agent in such a way that we are justified in calling him good, we must have regard to the circumstances which he has to control or modify.

At the same time this relativity is not complete. It is easy to magnify the importance of circumstances. They determine the particular direction of the good man's attitude rather than its general character, the details rather than the principles of his activity. What it is good or right for him to do may differ in this situation and in that; but the right action is not determined by the circumstances alone. It results from an attitude to the circumstances of life which adapts itself to changing conditions in a regular and determinate manner; and in doing so it preserves a certain general uniformity of character.

II

Two things therefore have to be distinguished in an enquiry into moral value. In the first place there are the general principles or the general character of goodness; and in the second place there is the application of this to persons and to circumstances in both of which wide differences exist. The powers and disposition of one man may fit him for a very different kind of work from that which is adapted to his neighbour, and he may be right in ignoring what is of supreme importance for the other. The artist, the man of science, and the man of affairs realise moral goodness by pursuing different lines of activity corresponding to the differences in their mental endowment. Of hardly less importance is the environment, natural and social, of man's life. Even apart from the effects of civilisation,

a different kind of life is required from the denizen of the polar regions from that which suits the South Sea islander. And each country, civilised or uncivilised, has its own historical tradition which is shared by its citizens and serves to distinguish their interests and even duties from those of foreigners. Further, there are countless differences, economic and social, within the same country, which serve both to limit and to direct the activities of each of its inhabitants in different ways. No man can quite take another's place or live another's life. All these circumstances have to be taken into account when we seek to determine how the highest value can be realised by a given individual or at a given juncture. Conduct in particular cases may raise questions of almost infinite complexity, which seem in strange contradiction with the reputed simplicity of moral law. And these difficulties press upon us if we attempt to elaborate and apply a theory of vocation—a doctrine of the way in which each man may employ his powers for the best.

There is ample evidence, therefore, of moral diversity, of moral relativity. But this diversity is not inconsistent with a unity of principle or of spirit; even the relativity may be found, in the long run, to be an expression of a good which deserves the name of absolute. It is true that in morality, as in other subjects, diversity of precept may often appear to be in conflict with unity of principle. And the principle needs very careful statement if this appearance of conflict is to be avoided. The universal claims made by the moral consciousness are apt to be asserted in favour of that system of ethical precepts which, at some given time,

regulates and is valid for a particular social system. Moral values have their most prominent application to the actions of men in society. They take the form of precepts, obedience to which constitutes the duty of a good citizen; and these duties are put forward as the sum of the moral law binding upon all men at all times and everywhere. In formulating the moral law, moralists have, indeed, always attempted to state those fundamental precepts only which have this universal validity. But, especially when knowledge of different races and conditions was still scanty, it was not easy to distinguish accurately the universal elements in morality from those elements in their application which were due to special circumstances. In many ancient codes—the decalogue is an example—we find precepts of limited applicability or even of ceremonial observance combined with other precepts which penetrate to the root of all morality. And even the modern philosophical moralist of the intuitive school is apt to lay down general principles which seem inappropriate when we try them by the test of extreme cases, and which are often difficult to reconcile with one another.

This failure to reach a clear statement of the permanent or universal element in morality has encouraged the adherents of relativism in their view that there are no common principles, and that everything depends on the kind of conditions with which a man has to cope. The inference is unjustified, chiefly for the reason that it mistakes the kind of common principles which we have a right to expect. Even if, with Kant, we reduce the essential element in morality to a merely formal principle of rationality, we save something very important from

the domain of relativity—namely, the objective duty of meeting circumstances by principle. The good or purely rational will of Kant, although it is unable to provide a definite system of moral duties, is not a mere tautology. It asserts the fundamental principle of the moral life—the obligation to have regard to and to follow the law of duty. This principle is, and by itself must remain, merely formal; guidance in the concrete details of life cannot be deduced from it alone; and when Kant attempted a derivation of the sort, he gave practical significance to the principle only by ignoring its formality. Yet Kant's words may be read as expressing the principle which lies behind all concrete duties and gives significance to life as moral and not merely natural. It is not in impulse or desire—not in the natural causes of action—that value or true worth lies; the worth of man as a rational being depends upon a point of view which lifts him out of the mere chain of cause and effect, and by its own law makes him the ruler of his impulses and desires—at once subject and sovereign in a realm of ends. In the consciousness of this law of the practical reason, and the moral duty of following it, we have the essence of Kant's ethics. And it can be regarded as unimportant only by those who have already implicitly accepted the same principle, namely this: that, although impulse and desire are powerful determinants of action, morality requires us to turn from them to a principle of a different kind.

The formality of Kant's principle is disclosed when he seeks to apply it to human conduct, and to get out of it a distinction between the classes of actions which are right and the classes of actions which are wrong.

Like the intuitional moralist he has his ready-made ethical genera—such as beneficence, justice, veracity, honesty, and the like—and he has to vindicate these by applying his principle to them. Now these general concepts of the classes of actions which are right have themselves been formed in the course of experience, by observation of the ways in which men act in the social and natural environment in which they are placed. The special conditions of the environment determine the ways in which men react to that environment, and influence our classification of such modes of reaction. It is here, accordingly, that there is the most obvious opening for the influence of external circumstances upon our moral ideas; and this indeed is the region in which we find most conspicuous instances of diversity in moral opinion. But we must not thus throw ourselves into the varieties of outer experience if we are looking for a universal and permanent element in morality. We must not expect to find the permanent or universal principle in classes of conduct valid for all circumstances; it should rather be sought in the moral spirit or purpose which may inspire the most diverse conditions without being itself restricted to any. It is in the spirit of good will, of justice, of truth that we must look for the constant element of moral value rather than in the precisely defined classes of action described by the same or similar names.

For this reason, it would appear that in the concept of virtue we get nearer to the essential nature of moral value than we do in the concept of the duties of man. Duty—the concept of a worth which is also an obligation—certainly belongs to the essence of a being who is self-conscious and free, and to whom both the

higher way and the lower are open. But duties (in the plural) necessitate the application of this principle to the changing details of life. And duty itself is a law for the will because of the intrinsic worth which makes it appeal to our conscience. It is true that the conception of the virtues also has been elaborated in connexion with the social system; but the virtues are not like the duties, expressed in general rules; and the seat of virtue is in the personal character—the ultimate bearer of value. And it is not in vain that we look for the manifestation of a common spirit in the wealth of detail that characterises the virtuous life. Throughout, it manifests the control of a lower by a higher—of impulse and selfishness by reason and love—and, at the same time, a purpose of realising in life the rule of reason and love and of adapting the actual world to this order.

In the affirmation of principle as contrasted with impulse we are in presence of a factor in the moral life which might be called absolute—in one sense of that much misused term. It retains its validity unchanged, whatever be the system of values in which it is displayed. But it is better to use the term 'absolute' for that which is complete in itself and without relation to anything beyond. And in this sense the principle is not absolute. On the contrary its significance for life is dependent upon a content—a direction towards or selection of objects on the ground of their worth. What these worthy objects are, and what the degrees of their worth, the statement of the principle leaves undetermined. It requires that the good be pursued and cherished; it does not settle what things are good. The good which it affirms is simply to hold fast by what

is good. Until we know something of what things are good, it remains a mere form; and its content can only be got from the judgments of good and evil which are based on the primary experiences of value. At the same time it is the principle upon which man's will, so far as it is a moral will, is founded. And, if not absolute, it is unconditional, because it cannot be altered by our value-experiences or their resultant judgments; and it does not change although the middle axioms of morality may need revision and modification. Its relation to the moral will and to the practical life may be compared with the relation of the axiom of non-contradiction to knowledge. This axiom by itself gives no knowledge of things; but it rules our thinking so far as our thinking is valid; and it is not changed by the progress of science. It is unconditional. Similarly there is an unconditional good, and it is the will to good. "Nothing can be absolutely valuable," it has been said, "except the indispensable subjective condition of *all* values in general, of all values actually present to anyone or possible in the future[1]." But this subjective condition is a condition of

[1] F. Krueger, *Begriff des absolut wertvollen* (1898), p. 61. Krueger's exposition, like the above, is based on that of Kant. But it differs from that set forth here in two respects. (1) Krueger holds that "the psychical capacity or function of valuing (*Werten*) is the object of the absolutely valid value-judgment or the unconditionally valuable" (p. 61). It appears to me that this valuing, so far as it is merely valuing or appreciating, is not approved unconditionally by the value-judgment: it must be accompanied by an attitude of will which adopts the valued or appreciated object as its own end. In the unity of the personal life the attitude of appreciation and the attitude of will are not often separated; but they are distinguishable elements, and they do not always harmonise. Value does not consist in merely feeling or thinking that something is of worth, but in accepting and willing the worthy object as worthy. This criticism is to some extent avoided (though it is not satisfied) by Krueger by the account which he

the whole personality. It is not simply appreciative, it is also and essentially an active attitude—a striving towards the realisation of the best conceived, though the concrete nature of that best may be far from fully defined.

Unity and variety are accordingly complementary characteristics of moral value. The unity is a unity of principle which controls and organises life rationally,

gives of the process of valuing (*Wertung*). (2) This forms the second point of difference between his view and that presented here. In his account of the process of valuing he emphasises the conative aspect which is required in order to make the process itself an object of value; and he does so in a way which largely obviates the previous criticism. But in doing so he does not bring out its essential nature as appreciation (as distinguished from conation). He describes valuings (*Wertungen*) as simply "dispositions to definite desires" (p. 39), and says that "every striving has the tendency to grow into a valuing": it leaves a conative disposition behind it so that, on repetition of the former state, the will is again directed to the original goal (p. 47). Now, however the fact of valuing or appreciating may arise, it is not contained in the conative disposition. The growth of a conative disposition is possible without appreciation of it, or of what assists it, as valuable; bad habits may establish themselves without any such approval or valuing. The valuing is a process which, although it may not be expressed in the form of a judgment, is yet reflex in nature. Even where reflexion is absent, strivings tend to perpetuate themselves in the form of impulsive or conative dispositions. Here valuing is absent: it is not a function of the merely conative (any more than of the merely emotional) consciousness.

It may be noted that Krueger uses the term *Wertung* for the fundamental process of appreciation. For the same purpose Meinong uses the term *Werthaltung* (commonly translated 'valuation'); and he has reserved the term *Wertungen* for those valuations which are relative to assumptions (or to images) and not to judgments of existence or non-existence (nor to sense-perceptions), while the feelings essential to them are "assumption-quasi-feelings" or "imagination-feelings," not "judgment-feelings." In these respects *Wertungen*, as defined by him, differ from *Werthaltungen*. They can never be entirely absent in the appreciation of a thing of worth, whereas *Werthaltungen* may be absent; but, on the other hand, owing to the relation in which imagination-feelings stand to feelings proper, the fundamental experience (*Grunderlebnis*) of all value is not *Wertung* but *Werthaltung* (*Annahmen*, 2nd ed., pp. 334–7). For my purposes the distinction is not of importance.

by selection of the better, and with a slowly evolving purpose of perfection. The variety is due to causes internal and external—the differences of personal powers and the differences of historical or external conditions. These differences give to morality its manifold applications: to each person a function and therefore a duty which no other person could exactly fulfil; at each juncture of circumstances something to be done in preference to anything else. The moral universe is thus a universe of infinite variety; and this variety is dependent on the varieties of what we call the actual universe—the universe of persons and things. Here, if we like, is relativity. But, while the diversity of application depends upon the existential conditions, there is a unity of spirit whose origin cannot be traced to the same source. The details are organised by it in accordance with a law which is distinct from that which regulates the actual order of things in time and space. The moral universe has a different principle from that which science describes for the actual universe, though it is only in the actual universe that the moral universe seeks and can find its realisation. And the moral organisation of experience exhibits the same principle throughout its details—a valuation in which the interests of the spiritual and social life are preferred to those of sense and self. Herein we can trace its unity through manifold applications—something permanent and persistent, pointing towards a completeness which may deserve the name of absolute.

The objectivity of the moral judgment may be vindicated along three lines of argument, two of which

have already been presented, while the third has been hinted at merely. In the first place, the judgment claims objectivity. It asserts a value which is found in the person or situation (actual or supposed). This is the meaning of the judgment. It is not about a feeling or attitude of, or any relation to, the subject who makes the judgment. Even if we trace its first appearance to an emotional or conative experience of the subject, that does not make the moral value subjective, any more than the dependence of empirical knowledge upon sensation makes assertions about existing facts subjective. In the second place, the moral judgment is universal; and this in two senses: first, because all who judge correctly must find the same moral value in any given situation: it is good or bad, whoever speaks, not good for one bad for another; and secondly, there is a universal element in all moral judgments, provided these judgments are correct. This universal element, it is true, is hard to state in the form of a general proposition concerning the good or ill of classes or qualities; but it can nevertheless be identified as a common spirit and purpose which characterise the good will and through it permeate the whole realm of goodness. In the third place, this common or universal element in goodness will be made clearer if we find that moral values are connected in such a way as to form a system —not a mere aggregate, but an organic whole—to which the name of Chief Good may be properly given. We have therefore to enquire whether moral values are so related amongst themselves as to form a whole of this nature.

No ethical science exists until we have reached

general propositions about good and evil. It is not enough to be able to say that this particular experience, A, is good, or that particular experience, B, is bad. We must be able to say, in general, that A, that is, any A, is good. But much care is needed in order to arrive at these general propositions. Suppose I judge, and judge correctly, that some particular experience—call it B—is bad. I cannot at once generalise the type of experience and state it in the form of a universal proposition. The particular situation is immersed in the flow of experience and can never be repeated; it cannot be generalised without being modified by abstracting from some of its details, and we are always in danger of abstracting wrongly. Yet clearly there must have been some reason why B was judged bad and not good or indifferent: and we must look for the feature or features in it to which its ethical value was due. Now the situation in question may be one which involved pain; and our first thought may be that this was the ground of our judgment. 'B is bad' will, in this event, stand for 'pain is bad.' But, before we have settled that this is its meaning and that we are justified in propounding the generalisation that pain is morally evil, we may be confronted with other situations involving pain, which, nevertheless, we hesitate to condemn. We may ourselves experience pain in attempting to follow a difficult argument or to solve a difficult problem, and yet be convinced that this concrete experience is far from a moral evil. In this case, we shall look back at the former experience to see if we can discover its difference, and we may find this difference in the circumstance that, in the former case, the pain was due simply to the

ill-will or malevolence of one man to another. And we may, perhaps, now rest satisfied that we have reached the true ground of our original judgment. It is not 'pain is bad,' but 'malevolence is bad'; and malevolence means the will to produce pain from a particular kind of motive. The example is not given for its own sake, but to illustrate the truth that when we try to get ethical propositions with general concepts for their subjects these general concepts may have to be somewhat elaborately determined, and may be far from simple.

There is another source of the complexity in moral judgments. Such judgments are primarily concerned with actually experienced situations; and they always imply a reference to existence, real or supposed. Now these experiences are complex and merge insensibly into still larger wholes. For our convenience we separate these wholes into parts which for our purposes may be treated as individuals, and which may even have an individuality of their own. But this individuality is never complete separateness or complete independence. Thus it happens that we express moral judgments about something which we cannot help recognising as complex both in its own structure and in its relations with surrounding circumstances. It is possible that its parts, as well as the whole, should have moral value assigned to them.

This was very clearly recognised by the utilitarian moralists. They analysed every concrete situation until they reached those ultimate elements which (according to their theory) alone had moral value—namely, the simple feelings of pleasure and pain. Their method of moral valuation consisted, first of all, in an estimate of

the hedonic value of each simple experience; and then, by the process of adding together the values of the pleasures and subtracting the values of the pains, the pleasure-value (which for them was the ethical value) of the whole in question was reached. Their calculation was very elaborate. But, elaborate as it was, it proceeded on an assumption which unduly simplified the process, and which experience did not warrant. They assumed that addition and subtraction were the only processes required—that if we divided a thing into its parts and knew the value of each part, then we could thereby calculate the value of the whole. Their procedure was mechanical, as it is called. Now, it is possible to take a machine to bits and then to put the bits together again in their old positions, and the machine does its work as before. It is also possible to take a living body to bits and then to put these bits together again in their old positions; but thereafter the body does not function as before, because the life has disappeared. This illustrates the difference between a mechanical whole and an organic whole. The former may be regarded as the sum of its parts; the latter is something more or something other than the sum of its parts. Now when moral value is realised in some concrete whole, consisting of distinguishable parts, that concrete whole of moral value resembles an organism in this respect, and has been called an organic whole or organic unity[1]. We cannot get at the value of the whole simply by adding together the values of its constituent parts. We cannot justly estimate the value of a man's life by summing up the separate values of each particular

[1] G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p. 30.

action he performs or of each particular experience he undergoes; for the more his life is organised by reason, the more is it the case that each action is not only a factor in the whole but finds its meaning in the whole. Nor can we judge the action of a society of men, with common traditions and a common purpose, simply by adding together the values of the conduct of each taken severally. It might be the case that the action of one taken alone had little or no positive value and was yet an integral and indispensable factor in a valuable whole.

The argument may be put simply with the help of symbols. We start with an experience which may be called A; and its distinguishable parts may be symbolised as $a_1$, $a_2$, $a_3$, .... We are in the habit (let us suppose) of passing moral judgments on each of these parts, and yet we must admit that the judgments are only provisional until we know the whole to which they belong; $a_1$ cannot be fully estimated without reference to the whole, A, to which it belongs, and apart from the value of that whole. But again, this whole itself does not stand alone. It may be an individual life, and its parts may be the conduct and other expressions of this life's purpose; but the individual life is passed in a certain medium, and we must know this medium if we would estimate the individual correctly. Or we may be thinking of the action of a group, such as the present cabinet, at some important juncture: when we try, often vainly, to get at their common purpose by observing the actions and sayings of each member of the group. But to estimate the value of their common action and purpose, we must take into account all the historical and other conditions in which they are placed: and the

value of what they do depends upon the value of the larger purpose which they are, more or less consciously, working out.

Theoretically, there is no point at which we can call a halt. The connexions of each experience are limited only by the limits of the existing universe; and its values are, in a final estimate of them, dependent upon the universe of values to which they belong. Short of knowledge of the whole we cannot fully determine the nature of the Chief Good. The absolute after which we strive is always ahead of us and never adequately comprehended. For it is absolute, not in its simplicity and separateness, but in its system and completeness. Our moral knowledge is not derived by deduction from a fixed and certain principle. It grows in amount and in organisation with the growth of our moral experience; and by criticism of this experience we gradually form less imperfect conceptions of the realm of ends, or world of values, as a whole.

The search for an absolute good or ethical absolute is carried out on different lines from the more familiar quest for an absolute when ideas of value do not determine the procedure. But the one enquiry resembles the other at its crucial points and in its outcome. In the purely theoretical enquiry it is the mere fact that first attracts us and dominates our perception; and in it, at the first view, we may think ourselves in presence of an absolute. But, as the moment of apprehension passes or as the centre of attention is shifted, our objective fact is found to be merely a portion of a larger whole, just as our perception of it belongs to a wider

field and flow of consciousness. Here, therefore, there is no absolute, but only interrelatedness and dependence of part upon part. Then we desert the particular and seek our absolute in the universal—in laws, or formulæ, or axioms. But when these are examined, we find that they are always statements of the relations between terms, and that their meaning is unintelligible apart from the terms, while the terms have been arrived at by abstraction from concrete experience. These relations may be unconditional, but they are not absolute, if by absolute we mean what is complete. Thus the search for the absolute is unable to stop short of that individual whole which is related to nothing outside itself because it contains all relations within it.

Stages similar to these, as we have seen, are gone through in the quest for an ethical absolute. Our first confident assertion of moral right or wrong has been found to lead beyond the immediate experience in order that its significance may be understood and its validity assured. The value of the particular case is determined by its conditions and its issues; we cannot trust to the mere momentary appreciation as it stands, or may be supposed to stand, alone. When we passed from the particular to the universal, the absolute still eluded us. The axioms and abstract theorems of formal ethics owe their significance to their application to concrete realities. These are parts of the connected structure of reality as a whole; and the values of any portion of this whole may be affected by the relations in which it stands to other portions. Thus, in a system of ethics, our goal would be a whole in which all values are included; and, if this goal is called an absolute, it cannot be related in

any external way to the absolute which has been sought along other lines of research. There cannot be two absolutes, one of which, and one of which only, is ethical. We can form a conception of an absolute only as an individual reality which contains harmoniously within itself both the actual order and the moral order.

# VII

## THE CONSERVATION OF VALUE

In the preceding pages some account has been given of the nature of value, of its claim to objective validity, of its connexion with the personal life, and of the system of ethical values. The problem remains of the bearing which the results reached have upon the view which we are entitled to form of reality as a whole. For my purposes this problem is central; and in the discussions that follow the relevancy of these preliminary enquiries will, I hope, become apparent. But one topic remains which is in the borderland between the purely ethical and the more metaphysical argument; and that concerns the conditions under which values are discovered, realised, and maintained.

One side of this question, and that the most important, has been made prominent by Höffding in his treatise on *The Philosophy of Religion*. According to his view the permanent and essential element in religion is a faith in the conservation of value. He holds that, if we analyse different typical forms of the religious consciousness, as expressed in creeds and practices, this faith will be found underlying them all, though it is not in all cases made explicit. It is the condition and principle of the religious attitude; and he accordingly speaks of it as an axiom. The axiom of the conservation of value, in his theory, is to religion what the axiom of the

conservation of energy is to physical science. Of course, it is not axiomatic in the sense of being self-evident, and it might have been better to call it a postulate. It is easy enough to maintain that the 'axiom' does not hold, and even to bring forward facts of experience which seem to throw doubt upon its validity. What is meant by asserting it is that the religious consciousness is vitalised by this assumption, just as physical science carries on its work upon the assumption that the quantity of energy in an isolated physical system remains a constant. The latter proposition, also, is not self-evident. It is an anticipation of experience, though an intelligent anticipation: for experience confirms it without being able to prove it completely. It is a postulate which directs scientific procedure and which, so far as appears, is justified by the results of that procedure. In the same way the axiom of the conservation of value is a postulate of religion—its fundamental postulate according to Höffding. It also is an anticipation of experience, and must submit to empirical tests. It is true that experience does not confirm it to the extent to which the axiom of the conservation of energy is similarly confirmed. But neither does experience refute it. The realm of existence is indefinitely great, and, as it unfolds itself to our observation, constantly brings to light new and unexpected situations; at least we can never be justified in asserting dogmatically that these situations will destroy the values which we cherish; we are therefore justified in holding to the faith in the conservation of value, seeing that this faith is a matter of life or death for the religious consciousness. Such, in brief, is the doctrine put forward.

According to Höffding the essential element in religion (or morality) is the "conservation of values".

The view is worked out in the interests of religion. But it treats religion as based upon moral experience and idea; its application is to the ethical religions, not to the nature religions, or to the latter only in so far as they also involve ethical ideas. In so far as it deals with value, Höffding's conception is strictly an ethical conception; as dealing with the conservation of value, it still comes within the scope of ethics or of the applications of ethics. But the problems involved are wider and more complicated than the simple phrase 'conservation of value' suggests. There are two aspects to be taken into account—the subjective and the objective. We are concerned with the ideas of value as they are formed and preserved in the human consciousness, and the realisation of this value in life; we must also take into account not merely the nature and powers of the persons in whom value is realised, but also the environing conditions which determine the limits and prospects of its preservation and growth. Hence the two aspects of the subject: the personal aspect and that of the environment. And each aspect suggests two questions. On the personal side we have to consider both the idea of value and its realisation; on the other side we must ask whether surrounding conditions will secure the persistence of values once produced and whether they are likely to aid their growth. We have, therefore, to deal not with one thing only but with four things: the discovery, the production, the conservation, and the increase of values.

In ethics, as in every intellectual study, reflexion follows in the wake of experience. The moral life precedes and supplies the material for moral ideas. If we

take as an example the enumeration of different views about the good life which Aristotle gives towards the outset of his *Ethics*[1]—the life of enjoyment, the life of social and political ambition, and the life of thought or science—it is evident that there must have been some experience of lives of these kinds before a man could reflect upon them and choose one or other as his ideal. He must have felt pleasure before he set his mind upon a life of enjoyment, seen social success before he took that as his aim, had some taste of intellectual effort and of the knowledge which is its reward, before he could speak of science as having the highest value. New experience may thus lead to new values—meaning thereby, not the creation of values, but the discovery of them in directions formerly unexplored. The supreme value which Aristotle himself ascribes to the scientific or speculative life is a case in point. Knowledge is not amongst the earliest fruits that ripen in the garden of experience, and at first it was not valued for its own sake but only as a means towards the attainment of more primitive objects of desire. This is man's first discovery about knowledge: it has instrumental value—helps him to attain many things he wishes and could not get without it, and points out short-cuts to things which could otherwise have been reached only by a roundabout way. And this is all the value, perhaps, which most men still put upon knowledge; probably, it is the only value which it had for mankind in early ages. It was its instrumental value that led to its cultivation; but in its cultivation men came to find intrinsic value: they discovered a good for its own sake in what they had at first

[1] *Ethics*, book I, chap. v, p. 1095 b 17–19.

used and regarded as a mere means. Its intrinsic appeal still varies even amongst those who can appreciate it. "The love of truth," says Leslie Stephen somewhere, "is but a feeble passion in the best of us." The statement of fact does not differ much, but how far apart is the tone of Berkeley's utterance! "Truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few. Certainly, where it is the chief passion, it doth not give way to vulgar cares and views; nor is it contented with a little ardour in the early time of life; active, perhaps, to pursue, but not so fit to weigh and revise. He that would make a real progress in knowledge must dedicate his age as well as youth, the later growth as well as first fruits, at the altar of Truth[1]." These words were written by a man who had spent the best years of his life in work of practical philanthropy. We cannot say of Berkeley, as we might of Aristotle or of Spinoza, that for him knowledge constituted the sole true good, the ultimate value. But he had certainly found in it intrinsic or independent value, not mere utility. To anyone without some share of his experience of the quest for truth and its satisfaction, the assertion of such intrinsic value in knowledge is meaningless. It was discovered slowly in the history of the race, and each man who enjoys it has to discover it for himself afresh.

Much the same holds true of æsthetic values. It is a commonplace that beauty is found now in scenery which was at one time felt as merely inhospitable and savage, and that the child and the man seek artistic enjoyment in different quarters. We do not need to assert, with the older utilitarians, that the sense of

[1] *Siris*, § 368.

beauty is based on a perception of utility which association has turned into other channels. Though it mixes with and is modified by experience of what is useful for practical purposes, the sense of beauty seems from the first to have an intrinsic quality of its own. But there is a gradual change in the æsthetic susceptibility to different classes of objects; and ideas of beauty are modified with the modification of æsthetic experience.

In the case of moral values also this process of progressive discovery may be observed. We cannot, indeed, go back to a period in the history of the race in which moral value was not experienced, and of which we might say that men in those days had no moral sense. But both the moral sense itself and the objects on which it sets value have had a history. At first there was no morality distinct from tribal custom; the individual conscience reflected simply the ruling behaviour of the society, which thus functioned as a norm of conduct recognised by each man; and its object was the agreement or disagreement between the acts of the individual and the prevailing traditional conduct which characterised the members of the tribe generally in their attitude to the more salient or striking conditions of their life. Nowadays morality is often contrasted with convention and not altogether unjustly. But in the beginning it was not so. Morality and convention were coterminous, and in unconventionality lay the sum and substance of immorality. At first, also, conscience was entirely of the nature of a sense of duty or obligation rather than a consciousness of value or good, and it has borne this mark prominently ever since: though, when reflexion awakens, the moral consciousness tends

to pass beyond the law to the good or value which that law expresses and protects.

With the rise of reflexion there comes also a change in the objects valued—chiefly by a modification of the tribal or social limits by which they were at first restricted. The circle of duties is widened until it gradually takes in, or is fitted to take in, all mankind; morality, which was originally tribal, becomes human. And the nature of morality is purified or refined: objectively, the law is interpreted by the good to which it tends; subjectively, conformity between overt act and rule is no longer regarded as sufficient; the importance of motive is recognised, and inward harmony with the good is seen to be required in order that goodness may be fully realised; morality is found to imply a state of the person, to be an inward possession and not mere correctness of conduct.

In this way, the history of morality on its reflective side has consisted largely in a modification and refinement of pre-existing values which is sometimes sufficiently striking to deserve the name of a discovery of values. At its earliest stage the root-element, or at least the most prominent element, in morality seems to have been sociality, and sociality of a limited kind—restricted to the tribe. The subsequent development follows two lines which often cross one another—the extension of the social application to widening circles, and the deepening of the inward spirit of the moral life. In virtue of the latter, morality becomes much more an affair of character than of conduct. These two—character and conduct—are related to one another as the inner and outer aspects of life; and the emphasis

comes to be laid more and more on the inner aspect. The outer aspect is not neglected, but it is seen as the expression of the inner; the sense of individuality is developed; ideals of purity, love, heroism, perfection are formed; and all values are found to have their home and to demand realisation in personality.

In this way every kind of value is or may be related to character and conduct. Truth is an ideal to be realised in a man's intellectual striving; beauty is something that may be produced and enhanced by his mind and hand. All values—the intellectual and the æsthetic, among the rest—have also a share in moral value, because they heighten personal worth and are, to some extent at least, within the reach of personal endeavour. The scholar's life and the life of the artist are examples of the moral life just as much as the lives of the philanthropist or of the ordinary good citizen. Values, once unknown, have been revealed in this way: intrinsic value has been found in instruments, such as knowledge; and things of intrinsic value are seen to possess instrumental value also by enhancing personal worth throughout its whole range. There is room for enterprise, therefore, in morality, even for experiment. But the experimental search for new values takes effect by deepening and widening the old values and not by discarding them. The process is a process of growth and development, not of destruction or of revolution.

The discovery of values is a matter of reflexion or thought, and it follows in the wake of experience. A value is not actual as long as it is merely conceived, merely an idea; it requires to be realised in experience:

until that has been done, there is (as has been already shown) no value, only a thought or idea of value. Now the practice of morality, as it is carried out in life, means the realisation of such ideas, the production of values. That values can be produced—that from being merely ideal they can be made actual—is the fundamental postulate of the moral life. The amount of value or goodness which actually exists in the world is dependent, to some extent at least, upon the volition of man. He can maintain, foster, and increase it. Whatever may be said of the cosmic process at large, his activity, at any rate, can only be explained as purposive; and in his purpose he treats all existence as material for the production of value. For him the world exists for the sake of personality and its worth.

The practical attitude, with its postulate of the production of value, is thus in many ways the antithesis of the scientific attitude which seeks only the understanding of order. The antithesis may not be complete, but some degree of opposition between the two attitudes must be recognised. The extent of man's mastery over nature is limited: limited in many ways by nature's forces, limited also by the narrowness of human knowledge. As Bacon taught, before man can enter into the kingdom of nature, he must be nature's servant and interpreter[1]. He must make use of the forces of nature and observe the laws of nature, and in order to do so he must first of all understand them. This understanding is the object of science; and it can be attained only as the result of an impartial study which disregards every value but that of truth, and has no preference for good over evil.

[1] *Novum Organum*, book I, § I.

The scientific attitude is therefore one of ethical impartiality or indeed of moral indifference as regards all values but the intellectual. This attitude was not arrived at all at once. It is the result of a distinction which, like all such distinctions, is a matter of convenience, a means of increasing one's powers by their concentration. Knowledge and practice are closely connected; knowledge is itself a kind of practice, and has an interest or purpose behind it; and this interest is frequently, and at first was entirely, an interest in other things than knowledge or truth itself. Indeed knowledge must always proceed by first selecting the object to be known. Even if any one now were so ambitious as, like Bacon[1], to take all knowledge for his province, he could not take it or seek it all at once. He must select, in the first instance, what seems to him most in need of interpretation; and, commonly, the line of enquiry which he selects has some interest for him beyond the pure interest of knowing. But Bacon himself and others of Bacon's time enforced the truth which had escaped many of their predecessors—the truth that the practical interest and the theoretical must be kept distinct, and that both interests will profit by the distinction. Not only must the base and the ugly receive equal study with the noble and the beautiful; but also we must beware of transferring to the processes of nature the forms or categories by which we interpret human activity. As science calls nothing common or unclean, so neither may it look for benevolent purposes in the cosmic order. The man of science must think himself out of that human prejudice which

[1] *Works*, ed. Spedding, vol. III, p. 109.

interprets all things as made for man—as means for his delectation or instruments for his moral improvement. The criticism of final causes, which we find in Bacon and Descartes and still more in Spinoza, was too indiscriminately applied to all forms of the teleological judgment, but it was justified of the methods against which it was primarily directed. The final causes formerly and currently appealed to in the explanation of nature were indeed like virgins dedicated to God, for they bore no fruit[1]. The progress of science required that this kind of appeal should be dropped, in order that facts might be investigated by methods which admitted of strict verification. The vindication of this impartial attitude resulted in the long triumph of the mechanical view of nature—a triumph somewhat disturbed in our own day by the difficulty of adapting it to the description of vital processes.

Now this scientific attitude—the attitude of mere observation and inference, with its horror of anthropomorphic conceptions—cannot give a complete interpretation of the world as a whole; for it is obviously insufficient when we take man himself into account. If adequate at all, it is adequate only within a limited range. Man is a part of the whole, and he at least by his activity introduces final causes into the processes of the universe. The effect of this activity may be small in amount as compared with the magnitude of non-human forces; but the question is not a question of less or more, but of the presence or absence of a purposive factor. The presence of this element of purpose in man is no proof of its absence everywhere else in the uni-

[1] Bacon, *De Augmentis*, III, 5; *Works*, ed. Spedding, vol. I, p. 571.

verse; but all that we have a right to assert at present is that at least one part of the universe does as a matter of fact perform the rôle of a producer of values. And in acting as a producer of values, man adopts an attitude to nature which is entirely different from his scientific attitude. He seeks to make existence contributory to an increase of worth; and he uses science itself as a means for this transformation. For science teaches him the conditions under which he must work in this pursuit and helps him to gauge the strength of the forces which are favourable and of those which are hostile to his purpose.

The question thus arises whether and how far man, who is an agent in the production of values, has ground for assurance that these values will be maintained or preserved. It is too obvious to need statement that man's power in the universe is small and almost insignificant when compared with the great forces of nature. If we trust in the conservation of value within the universe, then we are not trusting in man alone. His good will—even if we can be sure of that—needs the backing of force; and the force that he can exert is not sufficient for the purpose. If realised values are to be conserved—if we are justified in holding to this faith—then this conservation must be due to something in the order of the cosmic forces which is favourable or sympathetic to these values, which in a word is on the side of good against evil, and may be trusted to see to it that genuine values will not permanently be lost—that good will triumph in the end. This faith in the conservation of value, therefore, makes a demand upon the universe;

and the question of the validity of this demand raises the whole problem of the relation of value to reality—the metaphysical problem to which this work is devoted. At present, I wish to keep to the more strictly ethical ground.

The meaning of the 'axiom' may be brought out more clearly by considering how the case would stand if it were not admitted as valid. Let us suppose the faith shaken and abandoned that the cosmic order is on the side of good; let us assume that it is indifferent to all ethical values. The assumption is nothing more than the assumption which science makes as a convention for the limitation of its enquiries, and which materialism and naturalism make as part of a philosophical theory. We must suppose that there is no connexion between the causal sequence of phenomena and ethical values—at least none except such as can be verified by ordinary human experience of the fate of good and evil in the universe. From the time of the Preacher the moral indifference of the universe has been a commonplace of the disillusioned observer; and from the time of Job (and long before his time) the injustice of the universe has been the pessimist's complaint. Their view of the course of the world did not confirm the belief in the conservation of its values. Suppose then we let that belief disappear; does anything remain which may take its place? If the forces of the universe cannot be trusted to conserve values, is there any other way of conceiving the principle of the conservation of value which may assure us that there is some element of permanence about the things which we cherish most? Let us consider the possibilities.

1. One may perhaps, in the first place, point to what may be called the law of compensation in nature. In the course of history many institutions, many beliefs, many modes of activity, which were held for a time to possess high value, have disappeared, and have been mourned by those to whose devotion they appealed. But yet, when we take a larger view of the course of events, we find that the value has not utterly perished though its objects have changed. New objects and activities of worth have taken the place of old: so that the sum of actual values may even on the whole have been increased by a process which at first and to many seemed to entail nothing but disaster. So far as our knowledge of history goes, there is good ground for holding that this compensatory action has, on the whole, been characteristic of the changes which have taken place within the realm of values. In spite of many and great set-backs, the total conditions of the world at the present day are more favourable than they were some thousands of years ago to the production and preservation of values. But faith looks forward not backward. And the question is whether we have grounds for believing that circumstances will still further improve or even continue as favourable as they have been. And it is here that the trouble arises. According to prevalent scientific opinion, the material conditions which have favoured the preservation of values are not permanent, but only a transitory phase in the career of our planet. In time it will become incapable of supporting human life at all, when the achievements of art and science and morality will be as if they had never been. Long before that period it will enter upon the downward

path, in which material conditions will put increasing difficulties in the way of life and the things worth living for; the struggle for them will become more intense and bitter with each generation, until, in the vain effort to preserve life itself, men become forgetful of the things which make it worth living.

Accordingly, if we depend simply upon what observation enlightened by physical science can tell us of the prospects in store for human life, we are forced to conclude that the law of compensation will not hold indefinitely—that old values will in time cease to be replaced by equal or greater values, and that their place will be taken only by values of inferior worth or by none at all. There may be a long period of comparative security before the decline of values begins to make itself felt; but the end is sure. Confidence in the permanence of value throughout its changes of form and object can only be justified on the assumption that the account of the world given by physical science is incomplete. That confidence, therefore, implies a belief that the ultimate power in the universe is not indifferent to what man calls good. It is impossible to hold, as Höffding does, to the faith in the conservation of values, and to justify this belief, without being led on to postulate a power and will that conserves them[1].

2. But, at any rate, it may be held in the second place that, whatever may happen in the doubtful future,

[1] Cp. Varisco, *The Great Problems*, Eng. tr., p. 270: "Value will or will not be permanent according as the divine personality does or does not exist." And he argues further (p. 273), "If values were not permanent they would not exist. But they do exist." But the premiss of this reasoning would only be admitted by one who had already accepted the conclusion.

value is value: we have it and enjoy it now, even if it be about to cease. It may be that man and all his works are fated to disappear and to leave no trace on the troubled sea of time. But he lives now, and, so long as life lasts, it is better to live well than ill. The present hour is his and he can strive to make it a crowded hour of glorious life. If the hour is to be short all the more reason, it may be said, for making it glorious. The prospect of continuance does not affect present value —whatever our value may reside in. If pleasure is the only good that life has to offer, we shall cull the flower of the day, lest the frost blast it during the night; if there is reason to hope that the end will not come speedily, then we shall take thought for the morrow and lay up goods for many years: if any voice whisper "thou fool!" we shall answer it with Bishop Butler's reminder that probability is the guide of life and that we must not neglect our chances of tomorrow's enjoyment. And if our view of life is on a higher level, whatever of goodness or beauty or truth we can find in experience is surely real as long as it lasts, whether or not it has in it a principle of permanence not shared by material things. If the world were to come to an end tomorrow, yet, today, beauty would remain better than ugliness, truth than error, good than evil.

This reflexion is sound so far as it goes. Values retain their objective validity, even although we may doubt or disbelieve in the axiom of the conservation of value. This axiom is not the foundation of the objective validity of value. On the contrary it is the latter doctrine which leads us to assert the former. It is because values are objective that we are led to think that the

universe, which upholds and contains these objectively valid values, will not carelessly let them go but will provide some means for their permanent realisation. And thus, if we come, on other grounds, to deny this consequence, our doubts are apt to be carried back to the premiss; and we reject it (as has been often done) not on its own account, or for any weakness in its reasons, but because it seems to lead to a result which we disbelieve. For we have been brought up against, not indeed a logical contradiction, but an incongruity in the universe as conceived by us. We recognise the moral order as an objective order, but yet as something constructed on lines which are different from and irreconcilable with another objective order—that of actual existence.

3. It is in connexion with considerations of this kind, that we often meet with a third method of maintaining a doctrine of the conservation of value, which shall be independent of any demands on the actual universe in which our lives as individuals are passed. And this solution appeals to speculative minds. What we call the higher values—truth, beauty, goodness—are asserted to be independent of that temporal and distorted manifestation of reality which makes up the world of our ordinary experience. They are eternal verities, eternal values, unaffected by the flux of events and untouched by decay. So far as we realise them in our minds we partake of eternal life. This recognition is indeed the immortal part of man[1]. In it he is at one with the reality of which everything else is mere appearance. Now, from this point of view, conservation of

[1] Cp. Spinoza, *Ethica*, v, 33 ff.

value in the ordinary sense of the word is not needed. Eternal values do not require to be conserved, for their nature is to be eternal and therefore above the chances and changes of time.

Into the metaphysics of this view I do not at present enter. But, even should it be just speculatively, it does not give the kind of assurance that is given by faith in the conservation of values, though it may provide a certain compensation for the lack of that assurance. What was needed, and what Höffding's 'axiom' affirmed, was an assurance that the realisation of values would not be lost; and this assurance is not given. It is true that the value we apprehend or enjoy is said to be eternal; and in apprehending or enjoying it we may be said to partake of this eternity. But it is not contended that the finite minds, which at one time apprehend or enjoy this eternal value, may not afterwards lose it, or that the conditions of the world are and will be such as to preserve its apprehension and enjoyment. What remains is the value itself, eternally valid, whatever may happen to its realisation in individuals and societies. And this, again, is only a more speculative assertion of the objectivity of value: an assertion that it is truly real. But there is no assurance that the appearances of reality may not belie it: at the present time, they do to some extent belie it; what security is there that the discrepancy may not increase in the future?

There is, however, a modified form of this view which brings it more closely into connexion with experience. Moral goodness, at least, it may be said, is independent of anything that may happen in the physical world, because it consists simply in a state of will; and

the will may be determined by the pure idea of goodness, irrespective of all external circumstances. A view of this kind was worked out by the Cartesian Geulincx, whose spirit proved his superiority to the repeated misfortunes of his life; but it is more familiar to us in the famous doctrine of Kant. This doctrine is not, like the previous, an assertion of the eternal validity or eternal reality of goodness apart from any relation to human consciousness and its conditions. It is an assertion of the independence of this very consciousness of, and will to, goodness. Whatever befall in the outer world of physical forces, the good will may remain secure. "Even if it should happen that, owing to special disfavour of fortune, or the niggardly provision of a stepmotherly nature, this will should wholly lack power to accomplish its purpose, if with its greatest efforts it should yet achieve nothing, and there should remain only the good will..., then, like a jewel, it would still shine by its own light, as a thing which has its whole value in itself. Its usefulness or fruitlessness can neither add nor take away anything from this value[1]."

Although all nature is hostile or indifferent, if the mere will of a man is in harmony with moral law or with goodness, then in this harmony moral value is realised. So far Kant's view is true and significant. The good will can oppose circumstances, and in this opposition, whatever the issue, achieve a moral triumph. But the very fact that it can oppose them shows that it is related to circumstances. Action cannot be onesided; circumstances and will interact. Kant's doctrine, in denying

[1] Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, sect. i (Abbott's *Kant's Theory of Ethics*, p. 10); *Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, vol. iv, p. 242.

this psychological truth, drove will out of the world of experience into a purely 'intelligible' region outside the temporal order, so that both individual persons and communities of persons occupy an ambiguous and uncertain position in his scheme of things. Kant's view is adequate as a condition for the moral postulate of the production or realisation of value; but it does not provide a sufficient substitute for the axiom of the conservation of value. Nor, indeed, did he regard it as doing so. It leaves in abrupt opposition the will in which goodness lies and the order of existence; and his theory of the postulates of the practical reason was intended to reconcile this opposition.

It is characteristic of the moral, and also of the religious, consciousness to be impressed by the discrepancy between ideal and fact. The values which call forth the assent and allegiance of conscience receive but a partial and inadequate realisation in the world of personal and social life, and their position and supremacy cannot be maintained without a struggle. Moral practice has to be alert and active in order to maintain its ground—lest values once realised in life should afterwards be lost. But it is not restricted to holding what it has won; it cannot rest content with the mere conservation of value. The very essence of morality lies in the consciousness of an ideal and in the endeavour to bring existence into harmony with this ideal. The values which have been realised must not be let go; but their range must be extended over fresh fields of experience, and new means must be sought for enlarging the realm of worth. It appears to me that

Höffding has not fully expressed the nature of the moral consciousness, and that he has unduly limited the demands of the religious consciousness, in giving to his fundamental axiom the name *conservation* of value. Conscience is never content with the moral *status quo*: it demands perfection. And the religious consciousness would not be satisfied with the retention of the values that have been acquired hitherto; heaven has been pictured in many different ways, but never as simply a museum of moral progress up to date; life must contain the highest value that can be conceived, and not merely the values that have been realised so far. The demand which the religious consciousness makes always includes the moral demand for the increase of value: and it is of every increased value, and finally of values as fully perfected, that it postulates the conservation.

The analogy with the scientific axiom of the conservation of energy, upon which Höffding lays so much stress, may be illuminating in some respects. The moral principle has much the same axiomatic position in religion as the physical has in science; in both cases it is of the nature of a postulate under which the work of science and the life of religion respectively are carried on. It is not an *a priori* truth, but the expression of a need—an intelligent anticipation of experience, which awaits verification. So far the analogy is of service; but in other respects it is apt to be misleading. It suggests that the value of any whole—that of human life, for instance—is, like the energy (say) of the solar system, a fixed quantity which remains the same under various transformations. It is allied with the view that all values are to be measured by their contribution to

vitality in the biological sense, and that the biological process may be reduced to physical and chemical terms so that these life-values may be interpreted as quantities of energy[1]. And this is a wholly misleading suggestion. The moral world is in this respect entirely unlike the physical world. The latter is conceived as always consisting of the same quantity both of matter and of energy. The moral world is not thus fixed in the values it contains. The sum of values is not a constant. It may suffer diminution; it is also capable of indefinite increase. Like M. Bergson's universe, it is in continual process of creation. What I have called the production of values might, fairly enough, be called a creation. And this production or creation of values, where they had formerly no existence, is, as we have seen, the fundamental postulate of morality; and the creation it postulates has no assignable limits. This postulate is taken up by the religious consciousness, which asks not merely for the conservation of the values that have already been created, but also for a progressive increase of the values which are worth conserving: even if this increase and conservation should require a new heaven and a new earth.

The mere axiom of conservation—apart from increase—of values is better adapted to express the mystical side of religion than that religious attitude which arises out of and consecrates practical morality[2].

[1] As regards the view that 'life-values' are the measure of 'culture values,' compare the article of H. Rickert, 'Lebenswerte und Kulturwerte,' *Logos*, II (1911–12), pp. 131 ff.

[2] Cp. Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion*, Eng. transl., p. 258: "Value can only be preserved by means of changes and transformations....Only by way of pure mysticism, the logical outcome of which is ecstasy, can we (sometimes) attain to a disregard of this order of things."

For mysticism morality is essentially purgative: a process by which the soul is cleansed from the desires to which the world and the flesh give rise, and fitted to enter the region that lies beyond good and evil. The moral life is therefore for it only a preparatory stage which must be passed before we reach the higher levels; and once traversed it is left behind. All ethic is *Interimsethik*, a means to an experience which is higher than the moral and able to dispense with it. The soul thereafter becomes absorbed in the divine and eternal; and being lifted out of the storm and stress of circumstance leaves these things to their own insignificance. They are deceptions, or at least of little account, and unfitted to be the vehicles of eternal value. The world of ordinary life is negated rather than moralised. Nothing is of importance except the inmost consciousness in which self and God meet and are made one. There is no other sphere to which the realm of genuine values may be extended.

In this respect the mystical way is distinguished from that of practical morality, which seeks to infuse its values into every region of human life, and comes into union with religion in the faith that this enterprise will not fail. When all is said, however, the mystical life is still a form of human life. It may look upon the human period as only a stage towards an experience of a higher kind in which the tension of individuality is replaced by undisturbed absorption in the One. But in the world of present experience it cannot escape the conditions of finitude. The mystic, as well as the moralist, is bound to recognise the objective validity of those values which lift humanity out of the storm

and stress of mundane events, even although he may look for a higher range of values at life's distant horizon. If the cosmic order does not in some way conserve those values, or compensate for their loss by providing others still greater, then his faith also is vain. However high we set our hopes and ideals, it will be necessary —or, rather, the higher we set them the more will it be necessary—to find a universe whose actual order is able to confirm them. Even for the mystic, therefore, if his mysticism is to be a practical way of life, there is the same need as for the moralist—the need of finding some principle which will make plain the true place of value in the universe of reality. Into the quest for this principle we are now to enter.

# VIII

## VALUE AND REALITY

HITHERTO we have been occupied with certain points in the theory of value; and these points were selected for discussion owing to their bearing on the special problem that lies before us. That problem concerns the contribution which ideas of value, and in particular ethical ideas, have to make to the view of the world as a whole which we are justified in forming. In its mere statement the problem inverts a traditional and customary order of thought. It is the more usual, as it seems the more obvious course, to explain ethical ideas by reference to the nature of things than to take them as a clue for the interpretation of reality. But we have seen the difficulties of the former method. In it the characteristic notion of ethical valuation is never deduced; it is only introduced surreptitiously. From 'is' to 'ought,' from existence to goodness, there is no way that logic has not blocked. The other method, however, remains open to us.

The contrast of the two methods may be compared with the biological controversy concerning the priority of structure or of function. Do we see because we have eyes? or is it because we need to see, and have kept on seeing, that there are eyes to see with? Here, again, the most obvious answer is that it is the structure that determines the function; but the obvious answer is not necessarily the true one. Our question, indeed, is on a

different level from the biological. It has a wider range, and its special reference is not to function merely but to the ethical idea, present in consciousness only, which transforms function into duty. Given the structure of an organ and its environment at any time, it may be possible to determine the organ's function. It is when we ask how the structure came to be what it is that the question of the priority of function arises. But existence and goodness are not related just in this way. Given the structure, as it may be called, of the existing universe as a whole, we should be able to infer certain animal and human functions; but we should not be able to reach the conception of a good which has objective validity and which the conscious person is under obligation to realise.

Now, as we cannot pass logically from existence to goodness, or from structure to duty, we have to ask whether any way is open from goodness to existence. It is possible for an obstacle that blocks one's path in one direction to be crossed in the opposite direction at a step. Only, as the saying is, we must mind the step. Thus, if I ought to do something and do it, then it now is; if I see that something would be good and realise it, then I have brought this much goodness into existence. The transition has been made. But the step which we are required to take is a longer step than this. In this case it is only when duty has been done or goodness realised that we have compassed the unity of the two. When, however, I am merely conscious that I ought to do something, then that something is not yet done, does not yet exist, and may never exist. We apply the term 'good' to many things that we only imagine; and calling them good makes them no nearer existence than they

were before. It is clear, therefore, that there are obstacles on the way from 'ought' to 'is,' from good to existence, just as there are in the opposite direction.

Ethical ideas form a system of a different order from that of real existence. The ethical system—the ideas of goodness and the relations of these ideas—can be worked out on the mere hypothesis of existence. For its validity it is not necessary that there should be existing objects which manifest the goodness described. Neither here nor elsewhere can we argue directly from idea to existence. Kant's refutation of the ontological argument is fatal to any such naïve method of arriving at a doctrine of ethical idealism. At the same time the ethical idea is never without existential connexions; and such connexions have been already discovered to be of two kinds. In the first place, ethical ideas are facts of the personal consciousness, and they are realised through the will and in the character of persons. They have therefore a place in existent reality; they belong to that portion of the universe which we call persons; and a theory of the universe cannot be complete which ignores their existence as facts and forces. In the second place, they claim objective validity; and this claim is not invalidated by their being conscious ideas, any more than the objective validity of any other kind of knowledge is affected by the fact that the process of knowing is a process in some one's mind. Further consideration of these two aspects of ethical ideas may bring out the general character of the relation of value to reality.

"The one fundamental quarrel," said William James, "empiricism has with absolutism is over [the] repudia-

tion by absolutism of the personal and æsthetic factor in the construction of philosophy[1]." The repudiation is certainly good ground for a philosophical quarrel, but perhaps empiricism itself has not seldom been guilty of the same fault as that for which absolutism is blamed. At any rate it is a fault; and no philosophy can be complete or true which neglects the fact of personality and the ideas of worth which personality involves. These must be recognised as part of the data which philosophy has to interpret. At the same time, we may not assume (as James was sometimes apt to do) that the presence of ideals or desires justifies an assertion as to their fulfilment or realisation. To do so is to make the subjective interests of the individual into a standard of objective reality. And perhaps it is owing to the fear of falling under this perturbing influence that all forms of monism—intellectualist as well as naturalist—have been inclined to give too scanty recognition to the fact of human personality in the construction of their systems.

But a recognition of the facts of personal life does not necessitate any departure from an impartial and objective attitude. The facts investigated may be subjective facts in the sense that they belong to conscious life and that our knowledge of them depends ultimately upon self-consciousness or introspection. But every kind of fact is known only through the subject's power of knowing—conscious facts no more than physical facts. And, whether the facts be of mind or of nature, there need be no difference in the impartial attitude of the thinker towards them. When he makes his own

[1] *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, p. 279.

mind or his own ideals his object, his treatment of this object need not be modified by any desire to come to some particular conclusion, for example, to the conclusion that his ideals have or will have objective realisation. What is required of him is that he should take note of their existence as facts in consciousness and recognise their operation as forces which determine character and help to modify the environment.

The other respect in which ethical ideas have a contribution to offer to the formation of an adequate view of reality is not so obvious, and it is more contentious. It concerns not merely the facts which we call moral and which, as facts of the personal life, have as good a claim to recognition as any other facts, but the principles, ruling ideas, or moral laws which ethical reflexion formulates. In their case the mere fact of their presence in consciousness is a small matter compared with their meaning or objective reference. In respect of this meaning have they any legitimate function in the determination of our view concerning the nature of reality?

The most obvious answer to this question seems to be that moral laws or moral principles are conceptions in accordance with which reality ought to be regulated, but in accordance with which it is not regulated, or with which it agrees in only a very partial manner at best. Goodness, it is said, is one thing and reality another; we must not confuse the two. Reality may be good, and in parts it is good; but it may also be evil, and in parts it is evil. Consequently, as it is of mixed quality ethically, goodness does not belong to it as a whole any more than evil does. Principles or laws

of goodness, therefore, can be of no avail in interpreting the nature of things as an actual or real system. This would seem to be the most obvious, as it is the usual, answer to our question. Its positive statements as to the difference between goodness and the actual are also correct, so far as they go. And yet it would be misleading and incorrect to take it as a complete solution of the problem. And this for two reasons.

In the first place, as we have seen, ethical ideas enter into the history of actual existence as efficient factors. The world is a time-process which is in constant evolution; persons are amongst the agents in this process; and their activity is governed to a greater or less extent by their views as to what is good. In this way ethical ideas come to be literally constitutive of reality as manifested in time. The degree in which they are so may seem to many to be comparatively slight at the present moment: though it is difficult to say how slight or how great it is until we have formed a clear idea of the nature of reality. Further, as we are here concerned with reality as a process in time, we must have regard to the future as well as to the past and the present; and it is at least conceivable that, in the future, the degree in which life will be determined by ethical principles may be increased to an indefinite extent. It may even be increased so far that the procession of the ages, if it could be seen at a single glance, might appear as a manifestation of morality; reality might be conceived, in its time-process, as a realisation of goodness. This reflexion, no doubt, is matter of speculation, and it may be taken as merely imaginative. But it serves its purpose here if it illustrates what is matter of fact—that

ethical ideas are not cut off from reality, but enter into it, and that, even if we look upon the world merely as a system of cause and effect, we shall find goodness as a factor in its constitution.

The second reason for connecting goodness and reality is independent of the causal efficiency of ethical ideas and of the time-process in which this causal efficiency is shown. We have already seen that ethical principles do not depend for their validity upon their presence in any particular minds. They have an objective validity which may be compared with the objective validity of the laws of nature. They are not entities with a separate existence of their own; but neither are such physical principles as the axiom of the conservation of energy or the law of gravitation. Yet the latter are not subjective principles or simply ideas in the mind. They indicate certain aspects of the order of reality as a physical system; they constitute or help to constitute that system in such a way that existing things manifest this order. We say of them not that they exist, but that they are valid; but their validity cannot be separated from their implication in reality. To be valid is not the same thing as to exist, but it is to be valid *of reality*[1], so that this validity is included in the nature of reality.

Now, if we compare the relation to existing reality of ethical principles with the place in reality of physical principles, we must certainly mark a difference. Existing reality includes as a factor in its system those physical principles which are valid concerning it; but it does not necessarily embody ethical principles in the same way.

[1] Cp. J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 227: "Validity implies reality and is otherwise meaningless."

The very nature of moral law may seem to require the possibility of its not being realised in existence. There would be small meaning in the imperative of duty, if the nature of things were such that what we say ought to be always were just so. In what sense, then, can it be held that ethical principles are valid for existing reality?

This question forces us to ask another, Of what nature is the reality for which ethical principles are asserted to be valid? Clearly, they do not apply to that portion or manifestation of reality which is presented to us in the physical universe as it is described by physical science. Of it physical principles are valid in the only way in which principles can be valid of such a universe, that is, by constituting its actual order. But the universe for which ethical principles hold is the universe which is manifested in personal life. And persons are distinguished from material things by being centres of conscious activity whose nature it is to act in pursuit of ends freely selected. Their behaviour is not like that of material things, under laws simply; it is under the conception of laws. "A thing," it has been said, "is what it does." But a person is not merely what he does but what he is capable of doing. The law which is valid for him must exhibit its validity by appealing to his rational consciousness without restricting his freedom. The uniform behaviour, exclusive of all alternative possibilities, which nature exhibits and by which it manifests the validity of physical principles, would be a self-contradictory method for the manifestation of ethical principles by the world of persons, for it would be destructive of the rational freedom which belongs to them as persons.

As free and rational, persons are also purposeful, seekers of ends. The law which the person recognises as valid for his life is that which tends to the end in which personality is conceived as reaching its true good. This is an ideal, and its attainment must be looked for in the gradual process by which character is built up and conduct brought into rational order. The moral agent is thus compelled to regard his true personality as consisting not in the actual features of the passing moment but in an *is to be*—in something to which he should attain and to which he can at least approximate. This ideal self is conceived as in harmony with the moral values which he recognises, and it is at the same time regarded as the complete realisation of that personality which, throughout life, is always in process of growth[1].

If we would reach a true view of the connexion of value with reality, we must bear these points in mind. The validity of ethical principles and, generally, of ideas of value differs from the validity of physical principles. This difference, however, is not a difference in degree of validity. It is a difference in the reference of the respective classes of principles: ethical principles are valid for persons; physical principles are valid for material things; and this difference is the ground of the different kinds of validity possessed by each. In summing up these results I am at the same time approaching a first division of reality, from which the further advance of this argument may be made. This first division of reality may be formulated as follows. There are (1) existents, among which we distinguish persons from what may be

[1] See below, pp. 237 ff.

called simply things; (2) relations between existing things, of which relations the 'laws of nature' may be taken as an example; and (3) values.

This first division of reality is, at the same time, a classification of the objects of knowledge; and, as such, it raises certain preliminary questions, with which it is desirable to deal at once, although they can be treated in a summary fashion only. The classification is not founded upon an enquiry into the forms or conditions of knowing, and will not be affected by such an enquiry unless the latter should lead to a dissociation of knowledge from reality or from existence. Such dissociation, however, was the result of the investigation of the subject-object relation which culminated in Hume. The issue of that enquiry leaves us without any knowledge properly so called, and only with a succession of transitory impressions and ideas. According to Hume impressions arise out of the unknown; ideas, however, occur in a certain regular way which can be described by the laws of association; they have also certain similarities and differences, and even (he thinks) certain quantitative relations, one to another; but these do not permit of our making any statement about the world of nature or of mind which can be regarded as having objective truth. Hume, whose insight seldom failed him, saw that his conclusion involved the disintegration of all knowledge—not merely of theology and metaphysics but also of geometry and natural science[1]. Had he not

[1] It is in his later and more popular work, *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, that he attempted to limit to metaphysics and theology the application of the destructive criticism which he had applied to knowledge generally in *A Treatise of Human Nature*.

been somewhat perfunctory in his examination of one of his classes of the relations of ideas, even knowledge of quantities and of resemblances would not have been allowed to pass on such easy terms. As it was, he recoiled from the results of his analysis, and in his later works tried to tone them down. In his first work he did better; for there he probed the causes of his own failure. "Did our perceptions," he said, "either inhere in something simple and individual, or did the mind perceive some real connexion among them, there would be no difficulty in the case[1]." It was because he found (1) no unity of mind or consciousness, that he had to begin with merely transitory and isolated impressions; because (2) there were no objective relations discoverable that he was left with no world at all—only chaos. In all probability Kant had never read the words of Hume which I have quoted; but his own theory of knowledge was specially directed to a solution of this very difficulty which, said Hume, "is too hard for my understanding." Kant's doctrine of the unity of consciousness enabled him to dispense with Hume's assumption that "all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences"; his doctrine of the forms of perception and understanding gave a basis for a theory of objective relations.

This point of view enabled Kant to elaborate a compact and rational system in which the atomism of Hume was overcome. But one of Hume's difficulties was not surmounted by him. Knowledge still remained, if not divorced from reality, at any rate in only problematical connexion with it. And the reason for this lies

[1] *Treatise of Human Nature*, appendix, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 636; ed. Green and Grose, vol. 1, p. 559.

in a similarity between his own starting-point and that of Hume. The latter's enumeration of his perplexities and of their sources was incomplete. Behind the assumption that there is no mental or subjective unity of experience (an assumption which treats mind as a fiction), and behind the assumption that the data of experience are isolated units (an assumption which makes objective relations impossible), lay another assumption which he inherited from Descartes and Locke. This is the view that the direct objects in knowledge are in all cases mental facts—perceptions, as Hume called them, or what Descartes and Locke called ideas. Kant shared this view, and hence the subjectivism which clings to his system and which he was never able completely to shake off.

Reid was the first systematic writer who had the courage to question the ideal theory, as he called it, and to work out a doctrine of knowledge founded upon its denial. He held that in knowledge the subject is directly aware of an external reality. There is much debatable matter in his views; but he had at least the merit of recalling philosophers to an examination of their assumptions. The questions in dispute cover a wide field, and the discussion of them would be in large part irrelevant to the present enquiry. But we do need to take our bearings regarding them, and to come to some agreement as to the application of such terms as 'existence' and 'reality[1],' and the validity of using them of the object and of the subject of knowledge. To do this I must risk the appearance of dogmatism. But it will at least tend to clearness to state and defend certain epistemological propositions, which will be assumed in

[1] See the supplementary note on pp. 206 ff.

the sequel, even although it is not possible in this place to give them the full vindication of which they may stand in need.

1. My first proposition is that existence is given in the fact or act of knowledge. In knowing we are aware of something as there; of what nature the something is, and what exactly is implied by 'thereness'—whether, for instance, it involves spatio-temporal relations—these are subsequent questions. The proposition is simply that, in knowledge, existence is given. There is indeed another meaning of knowledge—distinguished in other languages, in French by the use of *savoir* instead of *connaître*, in German by *wissen* as contrasted with *kennen*, and in English described as *knowledge about* or *knowledge that* in opposition to *acquaintance with*[1]. In this sense—in the sense of *savoir*, *wissen*, *knowing about* or *knowing that*—we may deal with abstractions from which the character of existence is deliberately removed. Our knowledge of relations is of this sort; but it is founded on and arises out of the more fundamental kind of knowledge described as acquaintance or immediate

[1] The distinction between acquaintance and knowing about was formulated by John Grote, *Exploratio Philosophica*, part I (1865), pp. 60 ff. More recently its importance has been emphasised by Mr Russell, *e.g.*, in *Problems of Philosophy*, pp. 71 ff., where universals as well as sense-data are regarded as objects of acquaintance. It is distinctive of Grote's view that knowledge is regarded as never completely immediate. He therefore speaks of 'knowledge of acquaintance' rather than 'intuitive' or 'immediate' knowledge. "This knowledge," he says, "is knowledge which, to use a homely expression, would be immediate if it could"; "immediate or intuitive knowledge is knowledge with the smallest amount of reflection possible consistent with its being knowledge." "Knowledge begins when reflection begins, and no earlier, for in immediateness it is dormant"; "immediateness is confusion or chaos, which reflection begins to crystallize or organise." *Exploratio*, part II (1900), pp. 201, 203, 204, 206.

awareness or perception. Here we are aware of something existing. For the assertion that it exists there can be no formal proof; but if this assertion is denied, there is no other way in which existence can be reached.

2. The second proposition is derived from the nature of knowledge as a subject-object relation. In knowledge the subject is aware of an object which is other than itself—at least than itself as the subject knowing. Even the reflective consciousness of self which we have in introspection, so far from having a good claim to be regarded as the original and typical case of knowing, attains definiteness only by making the self observed an object to the subject observing, and thus distinguishing it as an other. The view that the primary objects of consciousness are 'mental modifications,' and the assertion that the primary certainty in knowledge is to be expressed in the proposition 'sunt cogitationes,' are variations upon the assumption that the mind can know immediately only its own ideas —the assumption that led to the failure of Hume and the difficulties of Kant. It is indeed hard to understand how the subject can know the object, the ego the non-ego. But is it really any harder than to understand how it can know itself? Knowledge is certainly a great mystery, which no knowledge can explain. But why do we say that the subject cannot know what is other than and unlike itself? It is probably a physiological doctrine concerning the sense-apparatus and the nervous system, coupled with a materialistic view about the seat of the soul in the pineal gland or other spot within the brain, that has made people think that knowledge of mental modifications is more easily understood than knowledge

of anything else. Apart from any consideration of the physiological processes which condition perception, it appears to me that self-knowledge is a subtler and more elusive process, and harder to understand, than the knowledge of objects which only a sophisticated psychologist would think of describing as 'mental modifications[1].'

At the same time the proposition which I am formulating makes no assertion about the nature of the object of which one is aware in knowledge. It may be mental in nature or it may be physical—the question is left open. Only, knowledge implies something other than the subject knowing. Nor does the fact of self-consciousness invalidate this statement; and this for two reasons. In the first place our normal consciousness of self is not a knowledge of the self alone, but of self in commerce with objects; there is always a consciousness of objects other than self, on which the reflex consciousness of self depends. In the second place, in the deliberate process of introspection, in which we try to eliminate other objects from our consciousness (always, perhaps, with incomplete success), the self known is objectified and distinguished from the subject.

3. The third proposition is that the object of knowledge is not an isolated something. The assumption was constantly made by Descartes and Locke that objects of knowledge, or in their language ideas, are given as isolated units; and Hume formulated this

[1] "The subject knows the universe," says Varisco (*Great Problems*, Eng. tr., p. 111), "but only in so far as the universe is enclosed in the subject." How "enclosed"? we may ask. The thing known must be "in" the subject only if by "in" we mean the same as "known by." In any other sense of "enclosure," the assertion involves a spatial or quasi-spatial view of the nature of knowledge.

assumption in the words that "all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences." It is from this assumption that the initial and chief difficulty concerning relations arises: how do these "distinct perceptions" get organised into the system of knowledge? what unity can there be in a world which consists of all these "distinct existences"? But the assumption which gives rise to this difficulty is not true to the facts of consciousness. Distinctness is not a primitive—hardly even a normal—feature of our perception or of its objects. In most cases it requires art and pains to achieve it. The hen mesmerised by a chalk line on the ground may be near this state on one level; the mystic wrapped in the contemplation of God and unconscious of all earthly concerns may be near it on another level. One perception—one thought—one "distinct existence" may form their universe. But, where there is any diversity in consciousness or its objects, distinctness is not attained without difficulty. The process of perceiving or knowing is a complex and changing activity to which many factors contribute without being clearly distinguished from one another, even when they point to a single end; and the object of consciousness is also varied and moving; a few points—or a single point—may be prominent in the field and form its centre: but this centre or prominent feature is not a "distinct existence"; it is part of the wider whole. Facts are not given or found as separate isolated existences, as Locke and Hume and some modern realists suppose. Distinctness is attained only by selective and concentrated attention; and thus it betrays abstraction and usually a certain artifice. Ideas, as William James

Knowledge is a subject-object relation not, had there any separation of the two.

picturesquely put it, have ragged edges; and I may add that their edges are ragged because we have torn them from their context. The same is true of objects. Their distinctness from one another is not absolute but only a matter of degree; they are all portions of an objective field—an object which we cannot grasp as a whole, but in which we proceed to draw distinctions: these distinctions being in part marked out for us by differences within the objective field, and in part due to our own purposes. Certain things (as we learn to call them), either by their own prominence or owing to our selective purpose, achieve distinctness in the objective field. But even that distinctness is not isolation; they are connected with, and not absolutely separated from, other portions of the field.

4. From this follows a fourth proposition. As the things which we distinguish in the objective continuum, and with which we have dealings practical and cognitive, are not isolated or "distinct existences" but portions of a connected whole, so the relations which we look upon as connecting one thing with another have equally an objective basis. Were it not for these relations, or for their foundation in the objective continuum, things would fall apart as isolated units; and, seeing that things are not isolated units but portions of a whole, their connexions one with another within the whole must exist or be objective just as much as the things themselves. Relations therefore belong to reality as much as things do.

This fourth proposition, therefore, follows from the preceding. And it has two very important consequences for our theory of knowledge.

In the first place, it is inconsistent, if not with the Kantian epistemology in any form, yet with that version of it which used to be known as Neo-Kantian. The relations, which give order to our knowledge and by means of which we arrive at some understanding of things, are not forms imposed upon these things by the subject, that is, by the actual subject or ego who knows them[1]. The dualism of an unrelated matter, somehow presented to the subject, and of immaterial forms of subjective origin which are somehow applied to this material, thus giving birth to objective knowledge—this dualism must be relinquished. We find things in an order. We do not first supply the order and then put the things into it: for without some order there would be no things and no material for them. The subject certainly plays an active part in cognition; but it plays that part by selecting the object of attention and marking its limits, as much as in formulating its relations. Things and relations equally are selected by the subject out of an objective field in which they are both present.

In the second place, the proposition has a bearing on the vexed question of internal or external relations. The theory of external relations, it seems to me, is connected with what may be called the atomic doctrine of knowledge. If we start, and are justified in starting, with isolated units, "distinct perceptions" or "distinct existences," then any relation which one such unit can have with another such unit may be something outside

[1] The reference here, it should be noted, is not to consciousness-in-general, or impersonal consciousness, as conceived, for example, by Rickert; cp. his *Gegenstand der Erkenntnis*, 2nd ed., p. 67.

its own nature—an external relation. For what other relations than external relations can we conceive as belonging to independent isolated units? On the other hand, when we relinquish this atomic theory, and recognise that objective existence, like our perception of it, is a continuum within which and between whose factors we proceed to distinguish, compare, assimilate, and draw many other relations, we see that these relations belong to the continuum, or object as a whole, and are within it, just as much as the artificially distinguished things which form the terms of these relations[1].

5. To these four propositions concerning the subject-object relation in knowledge and its existential implication, a fifth proposition should be added in order to define the nature and limits of self-knowledge. In attempting to formulate such a proposition, we are met with a special and grave difficulty. Knowledge is a subject-object relation; the subject knows the object; but when we speak of the subject knowing itself, are we not using language which is meaningless? Knowing is a relation, and a relation needs two terms, while here we have one term only. *Ex vi terminorum* what the subject knows must be an object, and therefore it cannot be the subject itself. The subject of knowledge is like the eye which sees all things but itself is invisible. This doctrine, which seems to make all psychology impossible, is yet sometimes received with avidity by the psychologist. "All introspection is retrospection," he says. The object which the knower has before him in introspection is truly an other, something that has been shed from his own life and is now a *caput mortuum*,

[1] See further in the supplementary note, below, pp. 213 ff.

a fragment of the past, and no part of the present living subject of knowing and doing. It has become something outside the subject-self; it is an other, an object.

This view has received distinguished support; but it seems to me to be more specious than true. Even if it be the case that, in the deliberate process of introspection, the object before us is the state of mind that has just passed rather than the state at the very moment of introspective observation—even if this be true—yet this past state cannot be entirely passed and done away with, for then there would be nothing to observe. Its traces continue into the present, and it is through their persistence that observation of them is possible. All retrospection, therefore, is introspection—as we may say, converting the psychologist's dictum. And the dialectic which lies behind the dictum and supports it, is equally faulty. Knowledge is indeed a relation; but it is a unique relation; and it is pure assumption to assert that, in knowledge, the two terms of the relation cannot stand for the same being—that the knower cannot also be the known. This is simply to assume the impossibility of self-knowledge, not to prove it. If we wish to demonstrate that self-knowledge is impossible, it is a plain *petitio principii* to set out with the assumption that the subject cannot function as its own object. The possibility of self-knowledge can only be understood by studying the actual process.

The view that the ego or self (if there is an ego or self) cannot be known has as its antithesis the view that nothing else can be the direct object of knowledge. This latter view also has been widely held, and is expressed in the assertion that the immediate object

of knowledge must always be 'mental modifications,' or 'ideas in the mind'—that is to say, states of the self. This view has been already criticised, and the only thing that requires to be said now concerning it is that it has one point of agreement with its opposite: the reasons given in favour of it are not taken from an examination of the fact of knowledge so much as from an *a priori* view of what knowledge must be. The former view was that self-knowledge is impossible because what the subject knows must be an object and therefore an other. This latter view is that knowledge cannot exist without parity of nature between subject and object, and consequently that subject or mind, being unique in nature, must have states of mind for its immediate object. Discarding both assumptions, we have ground for accepting neither extreme—neither that subject-knowledge is impossible, nor that all knowledge is of subjective states.

How then shall we draw the line between the object which is known as Self and the object which is known as Other? Shall we say that both are always intermingled in our experience? This also is a familiar view, but never more fully or finely stated than by J. F. Ferrier. He asked the question "What is the *one* feature which is identical, invariable, and essential in all the varieties of our knowledge?" and gave the answer in the first proposition of his *Institutes of Metaphysic*, "Along with whatever any intelligence knows, it must, as the ground or condition of its knowledge, have some cognisance of *itself*."

This proposition, however, is not perfectly simple; and its contents will repay analysis.

In the first place, are we to say that, as a matter of fact, knowledge, however it may appear directed to one object only, has always two objects? When we are perceiving a tree, is our knowledge really two-fold—of tree *plus* self, matter *mecum*? Is "the knowledge of self," in Ferrier's words, actually "the running accompaniment to all our knowledge[1]"? "There is," he says, "a calm unobtrusive current of self-consciousness flowing on in company with all our knowledge, and during every moment of our waking existence: and this self-consciousness is the ground or condition of all our other consciousness. Nine hundred and ninety-nine parts of our attention may be always devoted to the thing or business we have in hand: it is sufficient for our argument if it be admitted that the thousandth part, or even a smaller fraction, of it is perpetually directed upon ourselves[2]."

But if the portion of our attention directed to self is so small a fraction as this, can we be quite sure that it is an actual constituent of the mental state? Ferrier himself speaks of it as possibly latent[3]; and 'latent' means that it is not an actual feature of the conscious state, though appropriate conditions will make it such. And this, I think, is where the truth lies: as Kant puts it, the 'I think' must be *capable of* accompanying all our ideas[4]—it is not necessary that it should form an actual part of them all. When I reflect upon a state of knowledge in order to understand what its actual content was, the method of study is retrospective, as

[1] *Institutes of Metaphysic*, 2nd ed., p. 81. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[3] *Loc. cit.*

[4] "Das *Ich denke* muss alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten *können*."—*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 2nd ed., p. 132.

the psychologists have said; it is the cognitive state of a moment ago that I study, although I do so by means of the trace which that state has left in my mind. Now, so far as I can see, that state does not in all cases contain an element of self-consciousness which can be identified as present in it. I may be entirely occupied in the examination of an object of perception, or in thinking about it, without the reflexion entering my mental state that I am so perceiving or so thinking. That reflexion is always there at call—so to speak—a potential element of any cognitive state; but it is not in all cases an actual element in it. The truth in Ferrier's doctrine and other statements to the same effect is that self-consciousness is continuous with consciousness, a further development of it. From the first self-consciousness is implied in every conscious state, because it can be brought to light by reflexion. But it is not explicit there, because reflective examination may show that it did not appear in that past state. Its appearance means the raising of mental life to a higher level[1].

Again, in the second place, the reason why Ferrier insists that this self-knowledge in all cases actually accompanies our knowledge of everything else is not that this knowledge of self has, in every case, some additional value of its own; he admits that it may be

[1] Grote suggests that in such a state there is acquaintance with self as knowing but not knowledge that one knows.—*Exploratio Philosophica*, part I, pp. 60, 61. I agree with Grote, as well as with some contemporary writers, in regarding this self-knowledge as 'acquaintance' and not merely 'knowledge about.' But the self with which we are acquainted is never the 'pure ego,' any more than it is simply mental states apart from the pure ego. The pure ego is always a factor in the mental state known introspectively, but introspection cannot present it in isolation.

so faint as to be negligible (and often, when present, it would seem only to disturb the concentration of attention on the real object of interest at the time); but because he thinks that without it there could be no knowledge of any kind whatever. Is this correct? Is "this self-consciousness...the ground or condition of all our other consciousness"? It would be strange if this view were quite correct. For, if it were, we should have to admit that, when our other consciousness is at its clearest and strongest, it is necessary for its ground or condition to be extremely weak and faint. Those who observe external things most distinctly are least disturbed by thought or consciousness of self. We should need clear evidence to convince us that the consciousness of one object always requires to be accompanied by the consciousness of another object, even although that other object is self. Surely the true condition of all our knowledge is not a superadded consciousness *of* self, but the fact of its being a consciousness *by* self. It is the unity of the subject that makes it possible, not a duality in the object. At the same time this objective duality is never far off: reflexion at any moment will call forth the consciousness that this object is my object, and this is self-consciousness. My concluding proposition will therefore have to be stated in somewhat different terms from Ferrier's first proposition, and may perhaps be formulated as follows: knowledge of self is distinguished from knowledge of any other object inasmuch as it involves the explicit consciousness as an object of that self whose activity is the condition of knowledge of every kind; and this consciousness of self is implicit in all our other consciousness.

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

The terms Existence, Reality, etc., are not usually defined, because they cannot be analysed into simpler components. But they have a meaning; and as that meaning varies with different writers, and sometimes even with the same writer, it may be well to try and make clear the sense in which they are used in this book.

1. *Existence.* Sometimes Existence is said to mean simply position, or position in time and space, or at least in time, or position in the context of experience; at other times it is held to involve permanence, or persistence in mind, or it is regarded as a power of operating upon consciousness or as a permanent possibility of sensation.

The first interpretation seems altogether too vague. It was offered by Kant in his pre-critical treatise *Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund zu einer Demonstration des Daseins Gottes* (*Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, vol. II, p. 117). Existence is there called "absolute position" to distinguish it from the result of the process by which a quality is predicated of a thing. So far Kant anticipates his criticism of the ontological argument. If I assert the proposition 'a triangle has its interior angles equal to two right angles,' Kant would call that relative position. But I can simply posit the concept triangle without making any assertion about it, even that it exists. This is one sense in which 'absolute position' might be used; and Kant did not at first distinguish this sense from his own in which existence and absolute position are said to have the same meaning. When he does distinguish them, in his criticism of the ontological argument (*Kritik d. r. V.*, 2nd ed., p. 628), it is by defining the context wherein this position has place. "Through the concept," he says, "the object is thought only as in agreement with the general conditions of a possible experience in general"; but when we say that it exists, the object "is thought as contained in the context of the whole of experience." We place it in time and space (or, if it is a mental event, in time only) and also in the causal system to which it belongs. This is its position; and the claim of any object to existence is tested by the questions where?

when? what are its causes and effects? If we cannot assign its position in the spatio-temporal order, or in the 'context of experience,' we hold the assertion of its existence to be unwarranted.

Thus the question arises, does existence mean simply position in this order? The spatio-temporal order, and in general the context of experience, to which we refer, is not an immediate datum of experience, but a later construction. We have no experience of space, or time, or causation, by themselves: only of things in space and time and causal interaction. The spatio-temporal order does not exist apart from the things in it; it is a conceptual framework, made homogeneous by our conceptual processes, into which things may be fitted. Unless we had previous experiences of extended and enduring things, we should have no conceptions of space or time; nor any conception of causation unless we had experience of things acting upon one another. Accordingly it would seem that our first apprehension of things as existing is not dependent upon the systems or orders in which we ultimately place them. It is also probable that, if we could have formed a conception of these orders without apprehension of things, we would not have said that the orders existed, while we do assert existence of things when our conception of the order of their existence is still far from complete. On the other hand we may not assume that we first apprehend things as distinct existences and then bring these things into relations (spatial, temporal, and causal) to one another. Existing things cannot be apprehended except as enduring and extended and as continuous with their environment. Such objects, already in a 'context of experience' but with their exact position in this context still undetermined, are apprehended as existing. Subsequent reflexion defines their position in space and time and in the causal system; but the conviction of existence preceded this reflexion. Enduring and extended things are first apprehended as existing; the spatial, temporal, and causal systems are intellectual constructions built on this foundation; afterwards, when a question arises as to the existence of any object of thought, the criterion used is whether or not it has a place in these systems. Thus we get a convenient test of existence, but we have not reduced its meaning to simpler terms.

When we say that any object of thought exists, a contrast is suggested with something that does not exist. Every object of thought, everything we can talk about, is posited in some way—has some sort of 'being,' as we may call it. Certain objects only have existence. How then are we to discriminate existence from mere being? There is an indication of the answer in the familiar logical distinction of 'universes of discourse,' which differentiates the objects of our thought into various systems or orders. (The term 'universe' was used by De Morgan to signify the "range of ideas which is either expressed or understood as containing the whole matter under consideration" [*Formal Logic*, 1847, p. 41]; the introduction of the term 'universe of discourse' to convey the same meaning was due to Boole [*Laws of Thought*, 1854, p. 42], and it has been brought into familiar use by Dr Venn [*Symbolic Logic*, 1881, p. 128] and Dr Keynes [*Formal Logic*, 1884, p. 29].) It is customary to speak of any object of thought as 'existing' in some universe of discourse but not necessarily in that universe which we commonly call the existing universe. It is better, therefore, to say that such objects have 'being' in these other 'universes.' For the universe of discourse may be purely imaginative or fictional or it may be a system of universals, and to such universes we deny existence when 'existence' is used in any sense specific enough to discriminate between existing and non-existing objects.

To take an example. The object of hallucination is said not to exist, as contrasted with the object of perception which does exist. Now the hallucination and the perception both exist as facts of mind, and are so far of the same order. But, in addition, the object of perception is said to exist, whereas the hallucination has not an existing object. The ground for this statement (whatever its correctness) is that the latter is regarded as entirely dependent upon the subjective state of mind (it has mental existence only), whereas the former is not so dependent (it has also extra-mental existence). Here existence signifies, negatively, independence of the individual subject, and positively, that the object has a place *in rerum natura* or in the 'context of experience.' Here, as before, it is clear that this concept of a *rerum natura* or context of experience, which is used as a criterion of an object's claim to exist, is

itself a comparatively late result of the organisation of our experience. And a further point is brought out. The hallucination is called so because its object simulates an object of perception (that is, an existing object) so that we are liable to mistake one for the other, and consequently our primary apprehension of existence may be mistaken. The only means of correcting the mistake is further experience by which we place the objects of hallucination and of perception each in its own order.

The hallucination is a hallucination because its mental existence is mistaken for an extra-mental existence: there is a confusion of universes of discourse. In organising experience we form a concept of mental existence which we distinguish from that of the world of material things—calling the latter external and the former internal. Certain differences may be traced between the two: (*a*) The material existent has a certain fixity due to its spatial position; although its position may be changed, its spatial extension remains, and the change of position may be traced in relation to the position of other material bodies. (*b*) It has a certain permanence, of which we become aware through the power of the individual subject to repeat his experience of it under certain conditions. (*c*) It is trans-subjective, being an object which is common to all normal experients under appropriate conditions. The mental state is contrasted with it in these respects: (*a*) It is not extended or determined by spatial relations. (*b*) As compared with external things it is transient—though the transience of the mental state is relative to another if more recondite feature of consciousness, the permanence of the individual mind. (*c*) It is directly apprehended by one subject only. These are some of the characteristics which may seem to give material existents greater precision and even greater certainty than mental existents.

On the other hand, in spite of the rapid change of mental states, self or subject is a persistent factor in our consciousness, whereas our apprehension of material things is, after all, only intermittent. Hence many philosophers have been at a loss to justify our assertion of the existence of material things when we are not perceiving them. Hence also have arisen the attempts to explain the material world without ascribing to it an existence

independent of our perception. When independent existence is denied to the external world, an effort may still be made to vindicate in some way its continuous existence in spite of our intermittent perception of it. J. S. Mill's theory of permanent possibilities of sensation is the leading case in point. These "groups of possibilities" are regarded as "the fundamental reality in nature," and "the reliance of mankind on the real existence of visible and tangible objects, means reliance on the reality and permanence of possibilities of visual and tactual sensations, when no such sensations are actually experienced" (*Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy*, 5th ed., pp. 232, 233). Existence (as predicated of material things) is thus reduced to a species of the genus possible, its specific differentia being that it becomes actual under assignable conditions. This, which he calls permanence, is for Mill the distinguishing mark of existence. To nearly the same effect Spencer says, "existence means nothing more than persistence" (*Principles of Psychology*, § 59). Whatever the value of Mill's theory as a psychological account of belief in an external world, it seems clear that existence is a more fundamental concept than permanence. The latter is arrived at only after repeated experiences in which the former has been involved. These experiences of objects, however, are not strictly instantaneous; they have duration; and there is no such complete break between one experience and its successor as to make it difficult to understand the formation of the idea of a comparatively permanent object. Permanence, however, is a convenient test not so much of existence or non-existence, as of the extra-mental or merely mental existence of objects. Images are normally transient, changing with the flow of consciousness, whereas objects of sense-perception are comparatively permanent, or, more strictly, are capable of re-instatement in consciousness in accordance with definite conditions.

As compared with this test of permanence, therefore, the tests formerly referred to—position in time, space, and the causal system—do serve to discriminate between what exists and what does not exist: for instance, they mark off universals as belonging to a different universe of discourse from that of existing things. They are not the ground of our idea of existence, being themselves

dependent on previous perceptions of existents; but, when an object is not immediately known as existing, they may enable us to infer its existence, by finding its connexion with other existents, thus placing it in the context of an existing system.

2. *Being.* We apply the term 'being' to certain objects of thought to which we do not ascribe existence. This distinction is not found in every language. Plato, for example, was in a difficulty from not having this distinction of terms. He ascribed being or existence to the ideas which are the objects of intellect, and could not admit that the individual things which are objects of sense-perception had being or existence in the same sense; they arise and decay: they *are* not. In modern terminology, we commonly say that the individual things which we perceive are, exist, or have being, and that the universals which are objects of thought are or have being, but do not exist. Existence belongs to individuals only; but being may be ascribed to a group of objects of thought which widens indefinitely. These different 'beënts' or 'subsistents' have a very varying status. What that status is in each case may be matter of controversy. But it would seem that 'beënts' may all be arranged in an order determined by their connexion with existence. The blue sky is an existent; but the quality blue is not apprehended as by itself an existent. The blue of the sky which I now see is a feature of, or factor in, an existing thing; but this particular blue, in being abstracted from the thing to which it belongs, is potentially generalised, thus losing its individuality and proper existence. Similarly, the concept 'man' does not exist, only this that and the other man. 'Man,' like 'blue,' has being only, not existence; but its being (or at least our knowledge of its being) is based upon the existents from which the concept is derived. The same view may be defended for other beënts—number, for example —which are further removed by abstraction from existing things, but have reference to them and are illustrated by them. Again, we ascribe being but not existence to the relations between existing things; yet these relations are factors in a total existing complex which includes both the things and their relations. Other more formal relations hold of classes and qualities, and these are still further removed from existence; but they also are based upon the

nature of the classes or qualities, and the nature of the classes or qualities is based upon existents. Imaginative or fictional concepts present a new combination of qualities and relations founded upon experience of existence of some kind, but combined in a manner due to subjective interests. And the diversity of possible interests allows of the formation of concepts which are inconsistent with the facts of existence or even with a valid conceptual system. Further, the interest which determines the formation of the concept may be purely private and personal, and there may be no reason for assuming that the 'being' ascribed to the object is independent of the particular subject who forms the concept. It may even have no intelligible meaning, may be merely a combination of letters, like abracadabra, or a pseudo-combination of inconsistent qualities, like circular square; and in such cases we hesitate to ascribe even being to the concept. The reference in a judgment which Meinong calls its 'objective' may also be said to have being; and here also there is the same kind of connexion (more or less close and more or less accurate) with existence. Reviewing all these cases in which being but not existence is predicated, we see that they range from cases which are almost indistinguishable from existence (the being of a feature or quality of an existing thing) to cases inconsistent with existence (the being of a concept which contradicts the conditions of possible experience). The one common characteristic is a certain objectivity; but this objectivity may be conferred by the subject only, in positing an idea in his own mind or a proposition formulated by him.

3. *Reality.* Here I can only state the sense in which I use the term. In my usage it is nearly equivalent to existence, but with two differences. In the first place, it marks its object off from the imaginary, although the imaginary has always existence as a mental fact. In the second place, reality and real are used not only of the existing things to which, through our perceptive and intellectual processes, a measure of independence has been ascribed; but also of those factors in the conditions and behaviour of existing things to which we do not assign existence by themselves, although without them the things would not be what they are. Thus, for example, gravitation belongs to reality or is real, because without it the

physical world would not be what it is. Mathematical and logical relations are also spoken of as real, because constitutive of the nature of the universe; and it is argued that values belong to reality for a similar, though not identical, reason. I speak, however, of 'realising' a value, meaning by that the process of so modifying the nature of existents that the value becomes a feature of existing situations or persons. If I had used some other phrase such as 'bringing into actual existence,' there would have been more exact consistency with the use of 'real'; but there did not seem to be so great a danger of ambiguity as to necessitate the discarding of a familiar term for an awkward phrase. I do not restrict the use of the term reality to 'ultimate' or 'fundamental' reality; nor do I use the term in a 'honorific' or 'eulogistic' sense (cp. Urban, *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. XIV, 1917, p. 312).

4. *Relations.* This seems the most appropriate place for a note explanatory of what was said about external relations on pp. 199 f., and preparatory for some parts of the succeeding argument.

A portion of the objective continuum, provided it contains diversity within it, may be called a complex. It is not strictly a whole, because it is not isolated from the environing portions of the objective continuum; but it is a whole relatively to the parts which make up its internal diversity. In considering the problem of relations we may restrict ourselves to a complex of this sort, and ask what the nature is of the relations which we find between the parts (these parts being denominated by us things or terms) of this complex. The obvious answer is that the relations are internal to the complex, though they may be external to the distinguished things or terms within this complex. Whether they are thus external is a question which cannot be discussed fully here, but I think the answer to it will depend on our ability to get down to absolutely simple things or terms. If we can do so, their relations to one another may be found to be external to the terms; but if we are not dealing with simple terms then there is more scope for the relation being grounded in the nature of the terms.

When we say 'the knife is to the left of the book,' we assert a relation 'to the left of' which the knife holds to the book. Our reference is to a 'complex object,' as Mr Russell says (*Philosophical*

*Essays*, p. 182; cp. *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 159). This complex object he calls 'knife-to-left-of-book.' But it is really more complex than this. It is the knife and the book in certain spatial positions relatively to one another. The knife is at a definite distance to the left of the book, and it is on the same level as the book or else higher or lower than it by a definite amount. Further, each portion of the knife is at a definite (and perhaps different) distance from each portion of the book. These details do not interest us, even if we observe them; all that interests us is that every part of the knife is at some distance to the left of the book. We form this concept 'to the left of' to describe a great many different spatial relations which all agree in this one respect. But the objective ground of the relation is not a universal 'to-the-leftness,' somewhere within the complex, but just those numerous definite spatial relations which we imperfectly observe and describe.

It is clear that the relation which we assert is a relation actually found, or at least supposed to be present, within the complex object. To change this relation a change would require to be brought about within this complex object. On the other hand there is nothing in knife or book (apart from their position in the complex) which makes this particular relation 'to the left of' follow from the nature of either or both (cp. Russell, *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. VIII, 1913, p. 159). The knife may be transferred to the right of the book, or to the top of it, or their relative positions may be otherwise changed, without any noticeable change in either knife or book. Hence the nature of the knife, or of the book, clearly does not constitute the relation 'to the left of.' But yet this relation would not hold unless knife and book had natures of a certain kind. If either of them had neither spatial extension nor spatial position, the relation would be impossible. A ground or condition of their having such a relation is that both have spatial position; that is to say, the relation between them is *grounded* in their having spatial position. Now, as knife and book are impossible except as extended in space, extension in space belongs to their nature. Consequently the relation is grounded in the nature of the terms. The result for this case is that the relation is *constituted by* the nature

of the complex object, and that it is also *grounded in* the natures of the related parts.

Does this hold generally? So far as I can see, when there is a relation between two existing things, it is always grounded in some characteristic of one or both of them. It may be argued, however (cp. Russell, *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. VIII, p. 159), (1) that simple terms could have no relations at all if all relations were grounded in the nature of the terms, and (2) that all complexes are made up of simple terms. As regards (1), it seems evident from the example (a point with spatial position only) that a simple term with one characteristic only would owing to that characteristic possess a necessary ground for an infinite number of relations to other terms (that is, points): although the term in the example would not possess the necessary ground for other than spatial relations. (2) The second assertion is commonly regarded as self-evident. Thus Mr Russell holds that the denial of external relations would involve the complexity of every term and that this is a *reductio ad absurdum.* (Cp. also his *Our Knowledge of the External World*, p. 145.) Leibniz formulated the same doctrine in the second proposition of his *Monadology*: "There must be simple substances, since there are compounds"; giving as his reason for the statement that "a compound is nothing but a collection or aggregate of simple things." But the reason given is merely verbal. If by "compound" is meant a combination of simple things which once existed, or even could exist, separately, then it is not self-evident that "there are compounds." Unless "compound" means this, its components may not be simple. If "compound" means a whole in which analysis discovers variety, then it does not follow that "there must be simple substances." There are really two assumptions in Leibniz's argument: (1) that our analysis can discover simple elements; (2) that these elements, if discovered, would be found to be "simple substances," that is, capable of independent existence. Grounds are needed to justify both assumptions, for (1) our analysis of existents never reaches absolutely simple elements, and (2) even if we assume that there must be such, they may be incapable of existing otherwise than as elements in a whole. We are not acquainted with existing things which are simple.

It is always possible to abstract in thought a single quality from an existing thing or complex, and to consider this quality alone. We shall in this way arrive at a simple term but not at a simple existent. I do not underrate the importance of the enquiry into relations between terms or entities such as abstract qualities, though my general argument does not require me to enter upon it. But it seems to me that there is a tendency, in defending the doctrine of external relations, to take such abstract entities instead of existents as the terms with which we have to deal, and then to interpret existents after their likeness. Thus Mr Spaulding (*The New Realism*, p. 479), in defining the doctrine of external relations, gives as its first implication the proposition that "both a term and a relation are (unchangeable) elements or entities." If so, then the term cannot stand for an existent, for existents are never unchangeable and (so far as our acquaintance goes) never elements. Mr Russell deals so constantly with concrete situations that I doubt his being prepared to accept Mr Spaulding's view. Sometimes, indeed, his discussion of a particular topic (*e.g.*, the way in which he deals with the 'simple things' whose coming together makes a 'fact,' in *Our Knowledge of the External World*, p. 51) may seem to suggest a similar doctrine; but I do not think that he has made any statement from which it can be inferred. If it is only the (hypothetical) ultimate simple constituents of reality whose relations are external, then the doctrine of external relations should be re-stated in accordance with this view.

# IX

## THE DIVISION OF REALITY

The epistemological propositions, which have been formulated and defended, were not put forward as a substitute for a theory of knowledge. But they may serve to explain, and perhaps to justify, a point of view. They clear the ground and enable us to proceed to the consideration of the factors in that first division of reality which has been already set forth in outline.

The last point reached in these propositions concerned the knowledge of self. The order of statement was not intended to be significant; yet it is the case that, in the process of our experience, outward things attain a measure of definiteness and explicitness before the conception of the self is clearly formed. This is the order of knowledge: we look outward towards objects before the mind by a reflex effort turns back upon itself. This reflexion, however, convinces us that self is not just one object amongst others—a later product in time than many and difficult of description by the same terms. We see that, in recognising the self, we are recognising a factor that has been present throughout our experience, and without which no experience at all would have been possible. Self does not need to be known in order that knowledge of anything else may be possible; at least so I have contended. But it must be there and at work. Its conscious or cognitive activity

is always required in order that experience may exist. Perhaps there may be things, but there can be no objects or known things, without self or subject to make them possible. In nature, therefore, it is prior to all other objects of knowledge; and its place in reality calls for notice in the first place.

It is by reflexion—by a backward glance—that we arrive at knowledge (or an idea) of the self. But this reflex knowledge is only possible because the life of self precedes it in our immediate experience. And it is not as a mere thinker or knower that self itself is either experienced or known. The problem of knowledge has been too much with us, and has tended sometimes to obscure our view of the realities which knowledge can reveal. We are occupied with the conditions which make it possible for a subject to cognise an object, and we come to think of the self as a mere subject of knowledge—even as a sort of spectator set behind a window, upon whom images of things impinge through the glass. Or we go further and, with Leibniz, say that monads—that is, selves—have no windows, but that each is a microcosm, a little picture of the universe, and that what a man sees is just this picture developing into greater clearness. But it is not thus that self is either experienced or known. It is never the mere subject of knowledge, but always active and acted upon, a participant in the course of reality, creative and created, fashioned by the force of circumstance, moulding things as it works its way through them, and feeling in its own life every emotion of the adventure. Not only have selves windows, therefore; we may say that they have doors, through which they go out and

in in daily commerce with the things of nature. They are not unspotted by the world. There is no such thing as a pure ego: it is simply an abstract conception of the centre of experience; and the centre is perpetually gathering new experience which expands the circumference. In perception idea and science, as well as in emotion desire and volition, it does not merely mirror the world; it adds also to its own life, and gives fulness and precision to the ego of experience.

The nature of this empirical self undergoes continuous modification as fresh factors are added to it, and other details become blurred or fall away; its periphery is continually expanding and being defined. Herein unity is always incomplete, though it is always being sought. The true individuality of the self does not rest upon the resemblance or other relations between its successive states as facts of mind; the resemblance of one mind to another may be never so great, but that has no effect on the consciousness which each man has of his own identity; his individuality is rooted in the common centre of reference in all his states of mind: they are experienced and recognised as his—as one in spite of their differences. The feeling of pleasure or displeasure is, I believe, the experience which brings home to a man most convincingly this identity of the self as a continuous life[1]. This experience compels him to a subjectivity of attitude which he cannot confuse with the experience of any one else. We can almost imagine that an intelligence without pleasure or

[1] "A subject without feeling would care nothing for itself or anything else—such a subject would have no existence for itself, would not strictly exist at all."—Varisco, *The Great Problems*, Eng. transl., p. 97.

pain might confuse his own thoughts or ideas with another's. But pleasure and pain make him feel himself an individual distinct from all others, whose feelings may indeed, as we put it, be shared after a fashion, but still remain unmistakably his own. Joy and sorrow call forth the sense of identity and leave no room for doubt that each has his own individual point of view.

Herein lies the difference between the self—any self—and a thing. A material thing is apprehended by us as a mere object—an object which is not also a subject, at least so far as our knowledge of it goes. We can find no inner unity in a thing, such that all its changing states have a reference to some central point which affirms its individuality. On what grounds, then, do we speak of the individuality of a thing? We ascribe individuality to some artificial product—a statue, for instance—which has been shaped by the hand of man into unity and in which we can recognise the purpose of a mind. Or we may attribute it to some object which stands out in the field of perception with a particularity which engrosses the attention or which makes it resemble a human product—to the boulder, for instance, which the storms of an earlier age have left standing on the bare moor. But we seek it in vain in the block of unhewn marble as it lay in the quarry before it had been touched by pick or chisel. Thus we allow ourselves to treat anything as an individual which will serve our purpose as such, or which stands out distinctly from the midst of a fainter context; and we may cease to regard it as an individual when the purpose no longer serves, or when the distinctness of the object has faded. Here therefore individuality does not belong to

the external thing in its own right, but either is conferred upon it by mind or marks only a superior degree of distinctness in some part of the objective continuum.

If individuality is to mean something more than this there are only two ways in which it can be found in material things. It must be sought either in the smallest parts of which things consist or in the largest whole to which they belong. And neither way leads to any certain result. The atoms, which for long seemed to the physical philosopher to be the ultimate and indivisible constituents of the material universe, have yielded to scientific analysis and proved themselves no true individuals; nor is there any ground for believing that the electrons of present theory represent the final result of all future analysis. And our search for the complete whole of the physical universe, equally with our search for its smallest parts, seems to lead into the infinite. We may indeed say that the (possibly) infinitely small atom or electron is an individual, or that the (possibly) infinite material world-whole is an individual. But both the infinitesimal unit and the complete or infinite whole are speculative constructions of our own, and neither of them enters into our experience. In the object as object—the object which is not also subject—no individuality of its own can be found, though an idea may be formed of a hypothetical individuality at the limits of experience.

The common-sense view of the external world regards it as consisting of a number of things, distinct from one another, but connected together by a variety of relations. This view—we now see—requires modification in its foundation. Not only is the distinctness

of thing from thing incomplete; but, such as it is, it is due either to the comparative prominence of certain parts of a continuous field, or else it is relative to the interests of the persons who perceive and handle the things. Apart from this, there is no clear line of distinction between thing and thing or between one thing and the rest of the material whole. Such distinction as there is is a matter of degree, and altogether without that precise discrimination which marks off one conscious self from another conscious self and gives it a position of its own within the universe.

Physical or material science is not concerned with that subjective unity which distinguishes conscious experience, and this is the reason why it never reaches the true individual. Indeed, its proper concern is not with the individual at all, but, as has been already shown, with the universal—the law. Whether it follows the path of analysis or that of synthesis, its interest is always in the general principles which it may succeed in formulating, not in the particular things which confirm and illustrate these principles. Its own effort after completeness does, however, in spite of its preference for the universal, force it to take account of the individual or to offer some explanation of it. But the individual self always remains a puzzle or a stumbling-block, something that is never explained, or at most is explained away. As has been remarked, for physical science and for the philosophy founded upon it, spiritual unities are simply interpolations in the text of reality[1]. Science may show how the conceptions have arisen; but from the

[1] W. Dilthey, 'Wesen der Philosophie,' *Kultur der Gegenwart*, part I, div. vi, p. 59.

revised text of the book of nature, as edited by naturalism, they are expunged.

It may appear perhaps as if, when we start from an opposite point of view and recognise from the outset the subjective unity of experience, a corresponding deadlock will be reached. The case has, indeed, often been put in this way. Start with material things, and you may reach a professedly complete account of the universe, yet one in which mind or subject has no place. Take your stand at the point of certainty which your own consciousness reveals, and at the end of your enquiry as at the beginning you will have to recognise that all the objects of your knowledge—"all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth"—are at bottom only 'mental modifications.' The spectre of Subjective Idealism, it is true, has had its seat very near the desk of many philosophers, and sometimes made them write as if they were disembodied souls. But, in so doing, they have misinterpreted the facts which they experienced and on which their theories were based. What we are conscious of is never the mere or pure subject, it always includes something objective and other than the subject. The passage between subject and object is not blocked in this direction. There is no object (at least within the sphere of our knowledge, the sphere in which all the sciences are included) without a subject. And the subject is never—at least never known or experienced—without an object. Our conscious life has its being in traffic with objects; and this traffic is not cognitive merely but practical also. Knowledge is only one feature of those objective dealings with things in which our life consists.

From the first, therefore, self is known as in commerce with an environment which is other than it; and this environment both gives opportunity for its life and also serves to limit its activities. Although an other, the environment is necessary for the realisation of the self. Further, a portion of this environment functions as its body, is used as the expression of its thoughts and desires, and forms the medium of its communication with the world beyond. Although the body is indissolubly connected with the extra-organic world, so that there is a constant passage of material from one to the other, the former possesses an individuality which the latter does not manifest; and it owes this individuality to its being the direct expression of the life of the subject or mind. Thus men recognise each other's embodiment: other selves are not scattered about vaguely in the material universe, without any marks to distinguish them; the primitive animism which sees mind in every physical object is soon discarded; and we are seldom mistaken in the external appearance of another self. In this way, also, individuality is ascribed to other bodies—to animals and plants—which exhibit the signs of life, although on a lower level than that of human consciousness. It is not because of their external finish, but because that finish is the sign of an inner life, that we treat them as beings with an existence for themselves, and therefore as *quasi* selves.

There is still another aspect of the relation between self and environment which calls for attention. Partly in imitation of the environment, partly in contrast with it, the contents of the inner life are formed and distinguished from the outer world. The inner world—the

world of thoughts, memories, desires, and ideals—serves as a mirror of the external world, as an earnest of its possibilities, as a standard for judging it, and as a guide for our own reactions upon it. It enables us also to form the conception of other existents which have not the definite material embodiment of individual finite selves. The social consciousness as a factor in experience does not arise from these conceptions; but in them we may see the origin of the conception of society as a distinct object. To societies or groups of men we assign an existence which is not the same as the existence of their individual constituents: and thus we come to speak—whether metaphorically or literally, at least intelligibly—of a general will or the social mind.

The foregoing considerations lead us to make certain modifications in that first division of existents with which we started. The division into things and persons suggests a correspondence between the two members which we have not been able to verify. The ground of the apparent dualism is in the underlying subject-object relation, but that does not justify a separation of the subject-world from the object-world and an assertion of parallelism or other correspondence between them. We have no experience of one without the other; and the only individualising factor which we have been able to find in experience lies in the subject. Thus we have: (1) Selves, which possess or accrue a material embodiment, an inner life, and a social place and function—to the last of which, in particular, is due their description as persons. (2) Similar unities, on an inferior level, are found throughout the organic world; their inner life, so far as we can form an estimate of it,

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though it is always markedly below the human in unity and independence, varies indefinitely from the point nearest the human down to the point at which it is almost impossible to speak of each member as having a life of its own. Their sociality may be at a minimum or it may be so developed as to obscure all individuality. The more nearly they resemble man in bodily organisation and in behaviour the more clearly do we recognise that they cannot be regarded simply as things. The absence of this organisation and of any definite distinction of thing from thing in the inorganic world makes us hesitate to assign inner life to that region after the fashion of hylozoist and panpsychic speculation. And a similar but opposite reason—the absence of material embodiment—is one of the reasons which make us hesitate to speak of the social mind or general will as an existent. There remains (3) the region of material things, which we class as existent, but the constituents of which are without the individuality that characterises persons and even quasi-persons. The distinction of thing from thing is largely our distinction, imposed for our purposes or as a record of our impressions, upon a material whose own order shows differences, indeed, both in quality and in quantity, but each portion of which merges in its neighbour. Even the animate body, regarded as merely material, retains no permanent distinction from its environment. Its individuality is due to the life or mind expressed through it.

II Relations

When we turn to the next division of reality—the sphere of relations—we seem to pass into an entirely different domain. Relations are recognised as abstract

and universal, not concrete and individual like the members of the preceding group. They share the fate of universals—becoming a subject of controversy which often appears unreal. By one type of idealism—which may be called the Platonic—a higher kind of reality is ascribed to them than any that belongs to particular things. According to another type of idealism, which owes its currency to Kant, they are regarded as superadded by the subject of knowledge to a pre-existing formless material. Against both these views I seek to maintain the thesis that relations belong to reality as much as things do—and to the same existing reality.

The universal, such as man, planet, or the like, has not an existence separate from all the particular instances of it—from all men or all planets, for example; its existence is *in re*, in each of the particulars. This much may be taken for granted here, as indeed the doctrine underlies all that has been said previously. Now relations are in exactly the same case. The relation expressed in the law of gravitation, for example, is a universal, and as such does not possess a separate existence apart from actual attracting bodies. Given any two bodies at any time, we define their tendency to approach one another in accordance with this formula. Here then we have a statement about an actual present relation, defined no doubt by universals—as all individual cases and things are—but descriptive of an actual situation. The law of gravitation is simply a general formula which describes a relation which holds in this case and in all other cases of two material bodies in space. When we discuss the reality of relations, what



1. Higher kind of reality
2. Superadded.
3. Relations belong to reality.

we are thinking of is not the reality of the general formula, but the reality of the relation as it is in this and other particular cases. Just in the same way when we say 'man is mortal' we do not mean that the concept man dies, but that all individual men die owing to their nature as men. The universal relation may thus have existence *in rebus* in the same way as the universal species or genus has—provided, of course, we have grounds for asserting that particular instances of the relation in question are actually found.

If we take things as they are presented in our experience we find that it is impossible to conceive them without the relations in which they stand to one another. Apart from these relations the things could not be said to exist. Even supposing the spectator himself could be unaffected by the abrogation of the 'laws of nature,' there would be no nature for him to observe. Let us imagine for a moment that physical relations were absent—that there were no attraction of one body for another, no cohesion between the particles of a body, no law or principle of combination of atoms into a molecule, and no relation of its constituents determining the comparative permanence of the atom. In such a case there would be no perceptible or knowable world. Further, we should have to deny to things any spatial relations to one another and any succession or simultaneity in time. Would there be any meaning in saying that things, or the world, still existed? This ultra-Kantian 'thing-in-itself' would be unintelligible in any fashion; not only the forms of perception but the categories also would be inapplicable to it; it could not be thought in anyway. A material thing is inconceivable

and impossible apart from relations. Relations are accordingly as necessary to the existence of things, as things are to the existence of relations. Both are required in the constitution of the real. The distinction of relations from things is due to our analysis, not to an actual separation between them. It is true that concrete things may remain comparatively unchanged while certain relations are altered, but the relations cannot be entirely removed and the things remain.

It is equally true that relations need things for their validity. It is easy to see that the 'laws of nature,' for instance, would be without meaning apart from a nature whose laws they are. But it may not be so obvious that the same holds when the things related do not themselves exist. Relations may connect terms which do not denote existing objects and may belong to any conceivable 'universe of discourse.' As already shown[1], these terms, to which we ascribe being only but not existence, have been formed by abstraction from objects of concrete experience but are considered apart from their context in reality. To fix these abstractions and facilitate our thinking about them is the chief function of symbols. The symbol (whether it stand for an existent or an abstraction) is itself an existing object—a picture or a sound; but its visible or audible character does not concern us, only its meaning. And the meaning of a symbol (that is, of those symbols which stand for a term not for an operation) may be a material existent or body, or a spiritual existent or mind, or a merely fictional or imaginary object, or a quality or any characteristic abstracted from one of these. It is not to signify abstrac-

[1] Cp. above, pp. 211 f.

tions only that symbols are used. Without the use of symbols we should have only the most elementary 'knowledge about' objects. The apprehension of relations of every kind, except in its rudiments, is throughout dependent on the use of symbols. But the relations cognised hold not between the symbols, but between the meanings for which these symbols stand. The meaning of a symbol used in a proposition is the object which it signifies, and the meaning of the proposition lies in its application to the objects of which the terms are symbols. The symbol itself is arbitrary, accepted from tradition or selected for its convenience in manipulation. The thing signified must be known otherwise, either by direct experience, or indirectly by some inference from or refinement of experience. Symbolical knowledge, accordingly, and in general all relational knowledge, will be found to rest ultimately upon a basis of immediate, or what Leibniz called intuitive, knowledge.

But although the ultimate basis of all knowledge may be the same, namely, immediate experience, its objective reference may vary from the concrete facts of existence to the limits of possible abstraction. At the same time, the use of the same sort of symbols, whatever the objects symbolised may be, tends to hide the difference between these objects according as they are existents or have merely that degree of being which we can ascribe to abstractions. But, however different may be the universes of discourse in which the objects have their being, the relation always belongs to the same universe as its terms: if the terms are existents, then the relation is an existing relation; if the terms are

beënts only, then the relations belong to the same order of being. In neither case could the relations subsist by themselves without the terms.

III Values

I have spoken of values as a third division of reality; and the classification may seem to stand in need of defence. It is not necessary to repeat what has been said already regarding the objectivity of value. But the prejudice as to the subjectivity and relativity of value dies hard, and this chiefly from an ambiguity in the terms. There is a sense in which value may be called both subjective and relative without throwing doubt upon its objectivity or even reality. It is subjective in the sense that it belongs to subjects, that is, selves or conscious persons; it is not subjective, if by that is meant something due to the mental faculty of the observer who appreciates it. In this latter sense also it is not relative; but we need not deny it that name if all that is meant is that value is not found out of relation to persons. Indeed, the argument of this chapter has led us to expect relatedness everywhere within reality, instead of regarding it as an evidence of unreality.

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Values are indeed similar to relations: as the latter are found *in rebus*, so the former are always manifested *in personis*. There is also a further correspondence. Among relations we distinguished those cases in which the terms are abstract entities from the relations between concrete things. In the same way, there are certain formal propositions about value, amongst which, for example, Sidgwick's 'Axioms of the Practical Reason' might be counted, which may be distinguished from the propositions with 'good' as their predicate. But the real

difficulty of my position lies behind this. Let us admit (it may be said) that the value actually realised by persons may fairly be reckoned as part of reality. Yet this is only a small part of the value about which we speak, even of the value which we seek to realise. The latter is at best not yet real; at worst it will never be real. Taking it at its best even, we cannot at present count it as a part of reality. The objection seems conclusive. It would be conclusive if it were allowable to cut a cross section in reality as it is known to us at the present moment and to take that cross section as representative of the whole. The objection can be overcome—or, at least, its edge may be turned—by showing that this procedure is illegitimate, and that persons cannot be understood by what they have achieved at any given moment: that their nature is to be realisers of value.

The person cannot be judged merely by his achievements at a given moment. We must take account of what he is and can be as well as of what he does. Why does he approve the goodness of others or blame his own deficiencies? It is because his consciousness, his nature, is in sympathy with the value which he sees, even when he fails to reach it himself. It is the *anima naturaliter moralis* that speaks. He recognises that he has failed to 'be himself'—his better or moral self. He has affinity with the ideals which he approves even when he fails to follow them; the values are his values, and have their root in the nature which he shares with his social environment. After what has been already said, it is perhaps unnecessary to urge this point further. But the view here stated concerning value generally may be illustrated by a reference to Plato's teaching

regarding the relation of the mind to truth. For Plato truth is not merely a property of some propositions, it is a value; and philosophy is not merely a manner of thinking, it is a way of life. His description of the philosopher is accordingly connected with the literal meaning of the word philosophy. It is not wisdom that the word signifies, but the love of wisdom[1]. And in the lover Plato finds the analogue of the philosopher: the soul of a philosopher guileless and true (he says) is as the soul of a lover[2]. The lover who follows and worships beauty is already on the path which leads to philosophy. "The true order of going ... is to use the beauties of earth as steps" towards celestial beauty: going thus "from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is[3]."

And as love, if it have its way, lands one in philosophy, so the philosopher also displays all the features of love. For Love, as the myth has it, is half divine and half human, the offspring of Plenty and Poverty: "He is always poor and anything but tender and fair, as the many imagine him; and he is hard-featured and squalid, and has no shoes nor a house to dwell in. [But] he is bold, enterprising, and strong, a hunter of men, always weaving some intrigue or other, keen in the pursuit of wisdom, and never wanting resources: a philosopher at all times, terrible as an enchanter, sorcerer, sophist[4]." He shares the characters of both his parents, allied to the gods and yet among the poorest of the poor. No

[1] *Phaedrus*, 278 D.
[2] *Ibid.*, 249 A.
[3] *Symposium*, 211 C. (Jowett's transl.)
[4] *Ibid.*, 203 D.

god or wise man is a seeker after wisdom: he does not need to seek for that which he has already got. And the ignorant and foolish do not seek wisdom, for they do not feel the want of it. Thus the philosopher is in a mean betwixt two, just as Love was born of opposites. "Wisdom is a most beautiful thing, and love is of the beautiful; and therefore Love is also a philosopher or lover of wisdom, and being a lover of wisdom is in a mean betwixt the wise and the ignorant. And this again is a quality which Love inherits from his parents; for his father is wealthy and wise, and his mother poor and foolish[1]."

The most essential point in this description—so it seems to me—is not the fervour, the passion, the disinterestedness with which the seeker follows truth as the lover pursues his object. Undoubtedly that is a real characteristic. Plato holds that to the philosopher, as to the lover, all things pale in importance in comparison with one: the world is naught until he possesses the object of his search. But this fervour and disinterestedness spring from a deeper source. What is it that causes the restless eagerness of the lover? Plato's mythology is bold enough to answer, It is because the object which he seeks was once part of himself, till a jealous god divided them, and therefore he cannot rest until he has regained what is akin to him by nature. And this is the poetical rendering of the answer to the other question. When we ask, What is it that impels the philosopher to his unresting search for truth? the reply must be, Because there is a natural affinity between his mind and the truth which he seeks. He is not yet wise, for truth has to be sought;

[1] *Symposium*, 204 B.

he can never become completely wise, for there are hindrances to the full view of truth which mortal nature can never finally overcome. But he is not altogether ignorant; if he were he would have no impulse to philosophy; he can recognise the truth when he sees it and he is unsatisfied in its absence; and this shows that his mind is allied to truth and has kinship with it. Therefore the philosopher does not need to wait for truth to come to him from the outside. He is himself active in its pursuit, driven onwards by an impulse which is of identical nature with the goal towards which he presses.

Conveyed in poetical and mythical imagery, and sometimes only half revealed by it, this is the dominating feature in Plato's description of the philosopher. In his speculative activity the philosopher is seeking to realise his own inmost nature; truth is not something imposed upon him from without; it is his own reason made manifest. Philosophy is not a passive receptive attitude: it is a life, an active process in which the soul realises what is akin to its own nature—the vision of truth and reality.

There is of course another view than this, and one opposed to the Platonic. It has been held that in knowledge the mind is purely receptive or passive, and truth has been regarded as merely a mirroring of an order of nature which is altogether external to it. Bacon gave expression to a doctrine of this sort in his famous aphorism that into the kingdom of nature as into the kingdom of grace entrance can only be obtained *sub persona infantis*[1]. The philosopher, he thinks, must simply wait and watch for nature's teaching, and to it he must

[1] *Novum Organum*, I, 68.

submit his mind. It is true that by this submission he may be able in a measure to reverse the relation and become nature's master. But his mastery extends only to a certain manipulation of nature's forces whereby they may be utilised for works of practical advantage. For practical purposes he seeks control; but of his philosophical attitude submission is the keynote. The creative function of the mind, which Plato enforces, is ignored or denied by Bacon. He mistrusts the mind left to itself, and forbids any anticipation of nature[1].

Even for the purposes of scientific enquiry, this doctrine is too narrow. Without the creative function of scientific imagination, the world would have had no Newton or Darwin, no Bacon even. From a wider point of view, it is still more inadequate. Philosophy does not consist in a set of propositions about what goes on outside us. It aims at an understanding of the whole to which the philosopher himself belongs. In so far as he reaches this understanding he realises a value which he recognises as the completion of his own nature as a seeker after truth. Truth is a value as well as beauty and goodness; and in the whole of Plato's thinking it is treated as such. The validity of this point of view is still more apparent when goodness, or moral value, is in question; for the good is recognised as having a claim upon our allegiance: as requiring a doing which moulds our being, making it a realisation of the ideal. It is impossible to look upon this—as some thinkers have looked upon knowledge—as merely the imitation

[1] Some parts of the preceding discussion are taken from an article on 'The Philosophical Attitude,' *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. xx (1910), pp. 152 ff.

of an external order. It is rather a growing up into the maturity of one's nature.

Mere things—if we were to think of them alone apart from their place in the whole—would be seen by us as simply a succession of changing events; a larger view might convince us of definite directions in this succession towards increased differentiation and integration. But, apart from the idea of purpose which the thinker brings to bear upon them, there would be no notion of development in nature as distinct from regular change. It is impossible to think of persons in this way. They are ever seekers, striving for a good which they conceive in different ways, but of which they never lose sight entirely and which guides their search. They do not recognise the mere present as expressing their true nature, for they are always straining beyond the present after a goal. If you may not call a man happy except 'in a completed life,' it is equally true that you cannot tell what a man is except his life be complete—complete, not as it is ended by the accident of death, but, as it never is completed, by the realisation of its purpose or ideal. Accordingly, we do not get an adequate understanding of the world—which is a world of persons—if we judge it simply by its manifestations at any given moment or for some limited period of its temporal existence. Persons refuse to have their nature estimated by time, for it is deeper than the time in which it is manifested. We have to take into account what at any moment is only an ideal, if there is ground for regarding the realisation of that ideal as the completion of personality. Ideals, accordingly, may be held to belong to reality as much as do the persons whom they express;

and the problem of understanding reality involves the problem of interpreting these ideals and assigning to them their appropriate place.

To sum up. In saying that moral values belong to the nature of reality, two things are implied. In the first place, the statement implies an objectivity which is independent of the achievements of persons in informing their lives with these values, and is even independent of their recognising their validity. Whether we are guided by them or not, whether we acknowledge them or not, they have validity: they ought to be our guides. This validity differs from the validity of laws of nature, inasmuch as the latter do actually express the constitution of reality in so far as it is material. Moral values hold for personal life in another way; they ought to enter into its constitution whether they do so or not. Their reality has therefore been called imperative reality; but the phrase does not explain anything. What is implied so far is that the validity of moral values—seeing it is not derived from their acceptance by the persons for whom they are valid—must have another source. In some way it must belong to the system or order of the universe. To see how this can be, we must look at the second implication of the statement that moral values belong to the nature of reality. Reality, whatever other manifestations it may have, is manifested in persons; they are part of the real universe, and they come to form ideas of moral value and to some extent to frame their lives in accordance with them. Their lives are continuous efforts towards fulfilment of a purpose or purposes; and in their attainment of moral values the nature of persons receives an expression which grows in completeness as

value is realised. That is to say, the objective moral value is valid independently of me and my will, and yet is something which satisfies my purpose and completes my nature.

This second implication of the statement shows us more clearly the way in which value belongs to reality. According to the former implication, the value is objective, but the kind of being which it possesses is conceived as something apart from the existing universe. But this second implication of the statement brings out a connexion. Values characterise personal life as completed or perfected; they are factors in the fulfilment of purpose, and purpose is an essential trait of personality. It is possible that they may never obtain complete realisation in time. But, even so, they will express the limit towards which the nature of persons points and presses. In this way they belong to the sum total of reality as an existing system. And this connexion resembles that of law to fact in the causal system, with this difference: that the latter relation is exhibited at each instant of time, whereas the realised system of values is the limit towards which personal life tends in its temporal course.

The evidence is:
1. The fact of moral progress
2. The fact of moral progress implies objectivity.
3. Our seeking has its logical ground in a self-disclosing reality.

# X

## THE UNITY OF REALITY

The attempt at a division of reality has brought out everywhere underlying connexions. The distinct things, of which, at a first view, physical reality seems to be made up, were found to be without definite lines of separation from one another. They form parts within a whole. Without the relations which connect them with one another and with the whole, there would be no things. The relations themselves are within the whole; in this sense they are internal relations. And if they appear external to particular things, that is because, owing to our practical interests and to the limits of our imagination, we credit the things with a separateness which they do not possess. In like manner, the relations imply things as their terms; here also there is no complete separation; and the sciences which deal with relations are occupied with one factor of reality abstracted from other factors for the purpose of scientific enquiry. Persons, indeed, have an individuality which things do not possess. But their individuality also is imperfect; it never amounts to independence, or complete separation, of one person from others or from things and relations. For its individuality the self stands in need of objects and their relations and of other selves. It is a growth, never a complete or finished entity; and its growth is determined and furthered by ideals or values

which the self recognises as its own and yet as transcending its achievement. These values, therefore, also belong to reality, but not as something unconnected with the persons by whom they are to be brought into actual existence.

We are thus driven to the conclusion that the independence which the special sciences ascribe or seem to ascribe to things, to relations, and to persons also, is a methodical convention which does not correspond exactly with reality. We cannot know a thing as it is if we know it only by itself. What do they know of anything who only that thing know? The particular object—whether individual existent or relation—is but part of the whole; and there is a radical vice in any apparent knowledge of it which does not allow for its connectedness with the whole. Yet, it may be urged, how can we know the whole, or even approach a knowledge of it, except by the obvious process of piecing on to one another, bit by bit, our cognitions of the parts? If, on the one hand, knowledge of the parts seems to require knowledge of the whole, is it not equally or still more obvious, on the other hand, that knowledge of the whole must be made up of knowledge of the parts? To this question attention should be given here, because its solution bears upon everything that follows.

Scientific investigation proceeds by the dual process of analysis and synthesis. Since the days of Galileo this has been the established and recognised method. And of the two processes analysis is the more fundamental. We first analyse an object into its elements, and then re-construct it synthetically, or show how it could be re-constructed, out of those elements. There

is no doubt that this double process is essential, and that in many cases it is adequate for science and for the practical purposes which science serves. But the elusiveness of the search for ultimate elements points to the conclusion that there are certain limits to its adequacy for a full understanding of what takes place.

In the first place, the object which we set out by analysing is only an arbitrary whole. As a part of the universe it is determined by its position relatively to other things, and it is in a process of constant change owing to its own action and that of the environment. Science, however, proceeds by limiting its enquiries, and scientific manipulation is largely occupied in attempting to isolate the object of enquiry from the disturbing influence of surrounding forces, and in preserving constant the influences from which it cannot be isolated. But time and again it is found that, for a satisfactory explanation of the object, a wider view than before must be taken of its connexion with other things. Scientific advance is often made by concentrating attention on minute features of a situation which had been previously discussed at large. But it is also sometimes due to taking a step in the opposite direction and widening the survey. The latter method, for instance, was characteristic of the Darwinian revolution; it arose out of an enquiry in which the changes in the organism were investigated not simply by themselves but systematically in their relation to all the conditions, and to the changes in the conditions, of the environment. New knowledge of the part, namely, organic development, resulted from this knowledge of the wider whole—the environment and the organisms it contains. This new

knowledge about the organism could not have been obtained except by means of knowledge of the environment. It may be suggested, perhaps, that in this whole process, all that happens is that knowledge of one part is added to knowledge of another part. But the two are investigated together, and the new part introduced —the environment—is something that contains the first part—the organism. It is by means of the wider whole that we come to understand the more limited object. And there is no point at which we can draw a line and say, "Beyond this, knowledge of a wider whole will be of no use in helping us to understand the part." The truer our knowledge of the whole—even of Reality as a whole—the more adequate, *ceteris paribus*, will be our understanding of any of its parts.

In the second place, owing to the complexity of nature, our analysis of any existing object is always incomplete, and this incompleteness must affect the process of synthesis. An analysis is complete when we have discriminated all the parts which enter into the composition of the object, when these parts are ultimate units incapable of further analysis, and when we have discovered the relations in which these unanalysable parts singly and in their various combinations stand to one another. The inverse process of synthesis shows how the parts thus distinguished may be recombined in the same relations as before so as to re-constitute the whole. An analysis is incomplete if any factors have been overlooked in the process, or if the units in which it terminates are not ultimate. But an analysis may be adequate for particular purposes, scientific or practical, although we have to stop short

of the discovery of the ultimate units constituting the object and of their ultimate relations. Incompleteness does not mean falsity. If we were on any grounds to discard analysis as giving a false account of reality, we should have to discard the natural sciences. There are, it is true, metaphysical theories which are sometimes understood as having that tendency; but we are not concerned here with these theories nor with the question whether they have been correctly interpreted as destructive of science. Analysis is assumed as an essential instrument in the sciences and in the process of knowledge generally, and that is why some enquiry is necessary as to its scope and limits.

An analysis may be adequate for all apparent purposes, although it is not safe to found speculations upon it as if it were complete. The discovery of radium, for instance, showed the incompleteness of previous analyses of the constituents of matter, and had the incidental effect of invalidating an earlier calculation of the age of the earth founded on the conduction of heat. The calculation assumed the completeness of the current analyses of matter, so that the power possessed by radium of generating heat internally was overlooked. A generation ago it might have appeared hyper-critical to have attacked the argument on the ground that there might be substances to be reckoned with having properties so startlingly new as those of radium. But the advance of experimental analysis refuted the underlying assumption. In this case one analysis was discredited by a more complete analysis. And we are never able to say with certainty that an analysis of actual existents is absolutely complete and can be carried no further.

Even if we are confident that nothing of importance has been overlooked, we cannot be sure that the elements reached are incapable of further analysis. In physical science we pass from masses to particles, from particles to molecules, from molecules to atoms, from atoms to electrons. There we may be content to rest for the present—but only for the present. Atoms served for many centuries as the ultimate units to which scientific research, though only in a conjectural way, pointed. After only twenty years' familiarity with electrons, it is too soon to say that they are ultimate units. Indeed, there is no criterion by which we can determine that the units we have reached are ultimate units. And we must take into account the possibility that there are no ultimate units and that matter is infinitely divisible. In this case analysis never can be complete; in the opposite case, it never is complete, for we have never any sufficient ground for saying that our present units are ultimate.

Further, analysis discloses not only the parts or elements in a whole but also the relations in which these parts stand to one another and in virtue of which the whole is constituted as it is. Can we say that knowledge of these relations added to knowledge of the parts provides knowledge of the whole? The question has been answered in the affirmative. "The whole," it has been said[1], "is different from the terms and relations taken individually, but it *is* these parts *related*." But this assumption, though obvious enough at first sight, needs examination. Let us suppose a whole, X, which can be analysed exhaustively into three parts, elements, or terms—*a*, *b*, *c*—each of which will have various rela-

[1] Spaulding, *The New Realism*, p. 203.

tions to the others. These relations may be symbolised by R. Is the whole exactly equal to $aRb + aRc + bRc$? The answer will depend on the kind of whole with which we are dealing. If we are dealing with a machine or other artificial whole—a clock, for example—we can separate it into various pieces of metal which are placed in certain spatial relations to one another. The mechanic can reconstruct it out of these pieces by putting them together in their proper relations. There is nothing in the clock but the pieces of metal thus related in space. It is true that the clock as a whole has certain properties which do not belong to the separate parts; but these properties can be predicted by any one who knows the parts and their relations and who has sufficient mathematics. But nature is not limited to mechanical sequences which the mathematician can predict. Whatever his mathematical skill and however great his knowledge of the two separate gases oxygen and hydrogen might be, no chemist could have predicted that their composition in certain proportions would result in a substance with the specific qualities of water. In vital and mental processes it is still clearer that knowledge of the parts and of their relations does not give knowledge of the nature of the whole. Here we are in presence of what Wundt calls the 'principle of creative resultants[1],' and we have to wait upon experience for our knowledge. The properties of the whole can be known only from observation of the behaviour of the whole as a whole; analysis does not disclose them. Thus the writer already quoted gives a more

[1] *Naturwissenschaft und Psychologie* (concluding section of the 5th edition of his *Physiologische Psychologie*), pp. 108 f.

comprehensive definition of the whole: it "*is* the parts *and* their properties *and* the relations relating the parts *and* the possibly specific properties of the whole[1]." Now, it is by its properties that we know the thing, and, in so far as analysis fails to reveal the specific properties of the thing, it fails to give us adequate knowledge of it. As he says later on, analysis must allow "for a whole which is not merely the sum of its parts[2]." He seems to think that in this way we must "recognise a non-rational element in nature[3]." But it is needless to lay blame on nature. Reason is our instrument for understanding nature; and nature is not less rational because, in our examination of any thing, we must have regard to the whole, and may receive light from it as well as from its parts.

These specific properties of the whole are most conspicuous when we turn our analysis upon living or conscious beings[4]. Whether in living cell or in conscious

[1] Spaulding, *The New Realism*, p. 161.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 239. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 241.

[4] Even in the analysis of conceptual objects we are apt on reaching the elements to lose the way back to the whole and to re-gain it only by putting into each element the nature of the whole. The common analysis of (conceptual) space is an instance. Prof. Spaulding analyses it into the concept *point* and certain relations, among which *betweenness* is fundamental. *Betweenness* is thus defined: "A term $y$ is between two terms $x$ and $z$ with reference to a transitive asymmetrical relation R when $x$R$y$ and $y$R$z$." This relation of betweenness, however, holds not only of points in a line but of successive instants in time and of successive notes on the scale. Clearly, therefore, as of course Prof. Spaulding is aware, it does nothing to distinguish space from time or even from the succession of musical notes. The differentia must therefore be got from the concept *point*. But "point is, perhaps, indefinable," he says (*The New Realism*, p. 182). Looking forward to his analysis of time, one sees that "instant is, perhaps, indefinable" (p. 190). Now, if both are indefinable, and if (as is the fact) we have no immediate acquaintance with either, how are we to distinguish point from instant,

mind, the specific properties—what we mean by 'life' in the one case, by 'consciousness' in the other—belong to the whole only and not to the parts or to the relations into which we analyse the whole. The parts and their relations belong to the whole; but it is more than they; it possesses properties which belong to it not in virtue of these parts but in virtue of the unity in which they are found. It is difficult to name this principle of unity, for in naming it we tend to treat it as if it were one of the parts of the whole. It is apt to be lost in the analytic process, and it is for this reason that Goethe criticised the method of the analyst:

> Wer will was Lebendig's erkennen und beschreiben,
> Sucht erst den Geist herauszutreiben;
> Dann hat er die Theile in seiner Hand,
> Fehlt leider nur das geistige Band[1].

The "spiritual bond" is just that which makes all the difference between a collection of parts and a living whole. But neither in biology nor in psychology has it been found possible to isolate it, or to "catch it," as

space from time? Only if point has already in it something that determines it spatially rather than temporarily or otherwise. And this is indeed admitted. Of *point* he says, "it has a peculiar *quale* which can be best defined only in terms of that of which it is an element, namely space" (p. 182). That is to say, space is analysed into elements which can only be defined through itself, through the whole. This is seen by the writer who continues, "but that may be to define the term in a circle and to admit it to be indefinable logically." But refusal to define the term is not really a way out of the difficulty. For unless the spatial *quale* of *point* is recognised, and the temporal *quale* of *instant*, there is nothing to distinguish point from instant, and space might have been analysed into the one as readily as into the other.

[1] To understand the living whole
They start by driving out the soul;
They count the parts, and when all's done,
Alas! the spirit-bond is gone.

Hume puts it, without the parts or "perceptions" which it possesses. It disappears in analysis. And the consequent synthesis must share the defects of the analysis: for synthesis can deal only with the elements which analysis has disclosed.

It would appear then that, if knowledge is restricted to these two complementary processes of analysis and synthesis, it has certain limitations which tend to mislead, and thus to thwart the purpose of knowledge. But is it thus restricted? In our ordinary traffic with things we are not limited in this way. We are not always engaged either in taking a thing to bits or else in putting it together again out of the bits. We have or possess the thing first, and may even use it, as a whole. And the case of knowledge is similar. Before we can analyse an object of knowledge, we must have an object of knowledge to analyse. Nor does our knowledge begin (as Locke and Hume thought) with isolated elements, which we proceed to put together. It begins (as Professor Ward has shown[1]), with what may be better described as a *continuum* or indefinite whole within which we draw distinctions and note similarities and other relations. The necessary antecedent both of analysis and of synthesis is an immediate consciousness of an object which awaits distinction and definition, but which —seeing that analysis reveals it as a connected manifold— may be described as a whole, however vague and indefinite our perception of its structure. The same order may be traced in scientific work. The chemist, for example, receives his compound as a whole, and has some knowledge of it as a whole, before he proceeds to

[1] Art. 'Psychology,' *Ency. Brit.*, 9th ed. (1886), p. 42 b.

test and analyse it by his exact methods. Here, therefore, in the region of ordinary experience, we have an instance of the knowledge of things as wholes; and this knowledge is a condition antecedent both to analysis and to synthesis. It may also have a still more important function as their supplement.

Attention has been recently drawn by Dr Merz[1] to the importance of this view of the 'together' or *ensemble* of things. He has pointed out that it was anticipated by Goethe and Comte, and he has connected its prominence in later thought with the widening of biological ideas due to Darwin. To describe this attitude, and at the same time to bring out its contrast with the attitudes of analysis and synthesis, he has adopted the Platonic term synopsis. Analysis sunders a thing into its elements; synthesis puts these elements together again; synopsis views the thing as a whole. Synopsis is something more as well as something less than synthesis. Synthesis gives us a whole—or perhaps only a collection—each part of which is distinguishable and has been distinguished; synopsis contemplates a whole of which the parts may not be distinct. Only analysis can render them distinct; and, as we have seen, analysis is in danger of losing something in the process—not merely by incomplete enumeration of the elements, but by oversight of the principle of unity, which itself is not one element among others. Now synthesis is the making of a whole out of the elements which analysis yields; consequently, any defect in the analysis is carried over into the synthesis, so that the so-called synthesis is often a mere collection and

[1] *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. III, pp. 192 ff., vol. IV, pp. 431 ff.

not truly a whole, because the unity has been lost sight of in the analysis[1]. This defect synopsis does not lie under, because it is not dependent upon an antecedent analysis.

At the same time there is no necessary opposition between synopsis and analysis. The view of the whole may be retained, although the parts within that whole are given distinctness and their relation to one another is noted. Analysis is hostile to the synoptic view only when we regard the parts, which analysis discovers and renders prominent, as making up the whole and equivalent to it, that is, when we forget the limitations of analysis. If we keep these limitations in mind, then by "holding the parts in our hand," that is, by analysis, we shall yet not lose sight of the "spiritual bond" which unites them, and our view of the whole—our synopsis —will become clearer and more adequate.

This union of a view of the whole with command of the details within it is perhaps most conspicuous in the realm of creative art. Artists do not often reveal the secrets of their mental processes. But there is a letter ascribed to Mozart which gives a remarkable account of the manner of his musical composition. The striking passage in the letter is as follows: "The question is how my art proceeds in writing and working out great and

[1] Cp. F. H. Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 176: "At any moment my actual experience, however relational its contents, is in the end non-relational. No analysis into relations and terms can ever exhaust its nature or fail in the end to belie its essence. What analysis leaves for ever outstanding is no mere residue, but is a vital condition of the analysis itself. Everything which is got into the form of an object implies still the felt background against which the object comes, and, further, the whole experience of both feeling and object is a non-relational immediate felt unity. The entire relational consciousness, in short, is experienced as falling within a direct awareness. This direct awareness is itself non-relational."

important matters. I can say no more than this, for I know no more and can come upon nothing further. When I am in good form and have good surroundings, as in travelling in a carriage, or after a good meal or a walk, and at night when I cannot sleep, then thoughts come to me best and in torrents. Whence and how I know not, and of this can say nothing. Those which please me I keep in my head and hum them aloud, as others have told me. Holding this fast, one follows another (as if a fresh ingredient were needed to make a pasty), then counterpoint, then the sound of different instruments, etc. That fires the mind, provided I am not disturbed; then it increases, and I enlarge it with greater and greater clearness, and the thing becomes almost complete in my head, even when it is a long piece, so that afterwards I can comprehend it in my mind at a glance (as one does a beautiful picture or a beautiful person), and not bit after bit, as it is heard later on in imagination, but as simultaneous. That is now a treat! All the finding and making now pass before me only as in a beautiful strong dream. But the over-hearing, thus all together, is still the best. What has thus come about I do not easily forget, and perhaps this is the best gift our God has given me. When it afterwards comes to writing, I take out of the bag of my brain what had previously been gathered into it. Then it gets pretty quickly put down on paper, being strictly, as was said, already perfect, and generally in much the same way as it was in my head before[1]."

[1] *Mozarts Briefe*, ed. L. Nohl, 2nd ed., pp. 443–4. (I am indebted to Prof. J. A. Smith for the reference.) The editor explains that the letter as a whole is not genuine, but he has admitted it to his book because it contains "certain valuable expressions of Mozart on his art" (p. 441 n.).

The process as here presented is from particulars to the whole and from the whole back again to particulars. It begins with details, coming how or whence the artist knows not, and it ends with the finished composition written out note by note on paper. But the best of the artist's experience is neither in the first suggestions nor in the writing out, but between these two stages, when all seems heard together and the whole is comprehended at a glance; and, by his composition, he helps others to share his experience. Perhaps the method of other artists is similar. They express themselves through the details of line or colour or word; but their expression is controlled by an idea of the whole in which the many are seen as one. Theirs is the higher vision described in the metaphysical poet's address to the soul:

> When wilt thou shake off this Pedantery,
> Of being taught by sense, and Fantasie?
> Thou look'st through spectacles; small things seeme great
> Below; But up unto the watch-towre get,
> And see all things despoyl'd of fallacies:
> Thou shalt not peepe through lattices of eyes,
> Nor heare through Labyrinths of eares, nor learne
> By circuit, or collections to discerne.

Philosophers are divided on the question whether this synoptic view is to be recognised as a valid attitude of thought. It is often ignored and sometimes definitely rejected. Descartes, for example, formulated a postulate concerning knowledge which seems to exclude its validity. "All knowledge," he said[1], "is of the same nature throughout and consists solely in combining what

[1] *Regulæ ad directionem ingenii*, xii; *Philosophical Works*, transl. Haldane and Ross, vol. I, p. 47. Cp. above, p. 10.

is self-evident." His idea of a philosophical system seemed to be that it consisted of a long series of propositions of which the first was self-evident and the logical connexion of each of the others with the immediately preceding proposition equally evident. Mathematical demonstration was his standard and exemplar of every kind of proof. Now mathematical method depends upon a preliminary abstraction by which concepts are formed which are taken as the objects upon which its reasonings are directed; its legitimate application to reality will therefore depend on the degree in which its abstract concepts express the nature of reality. In carrying out his method Descartes started from an immediate concrete experience—his clear consciousness of himself as a thinking being. He decided that his conviction of his own existence depended on this clear consciousness, and he then proceeded to the generalisation that whatever could be (thus) clearly thought was true. Along with this general principle (and other general principles which it was supposed to vindicate) went an abstract view of the experience from which he started. The essence of the self was identified with thought, and similarly the essence of matter was identified with extension. Upon these definitions all his reasonings depend; and only if the definitions are adequate can a true account of reality be reached by his method. Even if his general principles and his reasonings are valid, it remains to be shown that the definitions adequately express the nature of what really exists and not merely some one quality of it selected more or less arbitrarily; and if this can be shown it will not be by the same kind of reasoning as he uses to link up his concepts once

they have been formed. It will require an insight into the nature of the concrete experience from which the start was made; as already shown, this insight will be imperfect if it depends solely on analysis; and the final synthesis of experience as a whole will share this imperfection.

It is in justifying their view of experience, or of reality, as a whole that many other thinkers have recognised the validity of the attitude of thought here called synoptic. The term is derived from Plato, and it describes the view of reality reached by *νοῦς* or reason as contrasted with that taken by *διάνοια* or understanding. The same conception is to be found in Spinoza's distinction of *scientia intuitiva* from *ratio*, and in the distinction between Reason and Understanding which was drawn by Kant and his successors, especially Schelling and Hegel, and which was popularised in this country by Coleridge; at the present day it reappears in M. Bergson's doctrine of Intuition which, as a mode of knowledge, he opposes to analysis and in general to intellect. The synoptic attitude has been in some respects differently conceived by these thinkers; and their greatest divergence from one another lies in their views concerning the relation of Reason or Intuition to Understanding or the process of reasoning. For the most part it is regarded as complementary to the understanding; and this is the classical view, from Plato onwards. M. Bergson, however, takes a different view.

In the theory of M. Bergson the contrast between intelligence and intuition is made fundamental. And this contrast, as he draws it, has two characteristics: the

doctrine of the practical nature of intelligence, and the assimilation of intuition to instinct. With regard to the former doctrine it may be allowed that the understanding of nature has for its original purpose the control of nature, and that intelligence is strengthened and sharpened by the constant pressure of practical needs and by experience of the advantages got from understanding them. But this relation between theory and practice does not necessitate the pragmatic explanation that the truth of the theory simply consists in its practical utility. The correspondence between theory and practice can also be explained on the view that the knowledge proves itself useful in its applications because it is true: the utility does not make it true; its truth is the ground of its utility. The former explanation is open to the fatal objection that it tends to discredit itself; for, according to it, the truth of the view that truth consists in utility must consist in the utility of this view. It would be difficult to show any practical utility which the explanation possesses; but if we did succeed in showing such utility, it would be formulated in yet another proposition, whose truth again would have to consist in some practical end supposed to be served by it, and so on indefinitely. But if the truth of the proposition does not consist in or depend upon its utility, then we may hold that its utility depends upon its truth: it is useful because it expresses reality or real relations in the form of knowledge, and this brings them within the range, and possibly within the power, of the human mind. Hence the practical uses of knowledge do not, as the pragmatists hold, constitute its truth; nor do they, as M. Bergson has it, interfere with its claim to

truth. Our interest in practical issues may and often does limit the extent and scope of our knowledge; but, so far from being an indication of error, their utility in practice is in some degree a verification and guarantee of the truth of intellectual propositions, for it shows that, so far as these practical issues go, they hold for the actual nature of the world with which we are in contact.

It is because he holds the intellect to be subservient to practice in contact with the physical world that M. Bergson regards it as untrustworthy as a guide to truth. Insight into reality is attained, he thinks, only by the process of intuition which he contrasts with intellect and assimilates to instinct[1]. Now, instinct is not less but more practical than intellect, not less but more under the thrall of the material environment. Intellect may emancipate itself from this thraldom; but instinct never does. It always manifests itself in movement. The motor tendency is not all that there is in instinct; but its characteristic is that the movement follows directly upon the perception, without being preceded by any idea either of the movement itself or of its end. It is this idea of the end which distinguishes intellectual activity, and thus opens the way for comparison of ends and control of movements, and ultimately for the emancipation of the intellect from its bondage to matter—an emancipation which instinct could not achieve without ceasing to be instinct and taking on the nature of intellect.

The way in which we form an idea of reality as a whole cannot be assimilated to the working of instinct. Even to describe it as intuitive may be misleading, for the term has awkward associations. For a whole school

[1] *L'Évolution créatrice*, p. 192.

of thinkers intuition implies an opposition to experience; and this opposition must be avoided, for our view of ultimate reality will not be independent of experience, any more than it is of reasoning, in its construction. With the same philosophers and with others, the term indicates a spontaneity of thought which can be admitted only with two qualifications—that given factors are always required upon which this spontaneous activity may operate, and that thought is never in any case entirely passive. Yet an indication of the nature of that which we seek may be found in the immediate knowledge which we have in sense-perception and in the consciousness of our own life. Immediate knowledge is indeed never knowledge of a complete whole, but neither is it knowledge of an exactly defined and isolated part. Its object is always a continuum, which is not absolutely marked off from everything else, which defies exhaustive analysis into its elements, and which is not adequately reconstructed by a synthesis of these elements. At the outset of knowledge, therefore, we have acquaintance with something more than the distinguishable parts into which we afterwards analyse the thing known. This knowledge resembles vision, not discourse; and in this respect our final metaphysical idea will be like it. It will be a view of the world mediated indeed by reasons, but itself more comprehensive than those reasons; and it will possess the wholeness of the immediate intuition.

What is it that chiefly interests us in a philosopher? asked William James; and he answered that it is not his arguments but his vision, what he sees in the world or what he sees the world as being, not the logical steps

by which he professes to have reached that vision. "A philosophy is the expression of a man's intimate character, and all definitions of the universe are but the deliberately adopted reactions of human characters upon it[1]." To much the same effect is the definition which Mr Bradley has casually thrown out, "Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct[2]." These are *obiter dicta*, and their precise terms should not be scrutinised too curiously. But they do not stand alone. In one of his latest writings, if not his very latest, Lotze gave expression to a similar view in describing the motives which had determined his own life-work. "Philosophy is always a piece of life," he said, and "except in rare cases, a prolonged philosophical labour is nothing else but the attempt to justify scientifically a fundamental view of things which has been adopted in early life[3]." The vision is deeper and more permanent than the scientific apparatus by which it is described or defended. Hence a philosopher like Berkeley may spend his life in the service of a vision which has been shown to him in boyhood. But the essential point is not the time of life at which a theory was first adopted. What is of chief importance is the distinction between the concrete view of a whole, which must resemble vision or imagination, and the connexions which we seek to discover by reasoning between the parts or elements in a whole. And I think that it is this distinction that is mainly in view when a

[1] W. James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 20.

[2] *Appearance and Reality*, p. xiv.

[3] 'Philosophy in the last forty years,' *Contemporary Review*, January 1880, p. 137.

philosopher contrasts reason with understanding or intuition with analysis. The philosophical synopsis is a process in which imagination is called in to construct a new intuition, based on the facts and connexions laid bare by analysis, but imitating the togetherness or wholeness of perception.

In knowledge of self we have the leading example of that view of an object as a whole which has been distinguished from the complementary processes of analysis and synthesis. "There is one reality, at least," says M. Bergson, "which we all seize from within, by intuition and not by simple analysis. It is our own personality in its flowing through time—our self which endures. We may sympathise intellectually with nothing else, but we certainly sympathise with our own selves[1]." Only, it is hardly correct to call this process sympathy, for it is an experience which is deeper than sympathy, seeing that it is not dependent on any reference to another. It is an apprehension which is immediate—which is lived in the moment that it is known, although it is preserved in memory and clarified by reflexion. In this immediate knowledge of the self we find the two marks of wholeness which are absent from analysis and its results. The psychologist may distinguish and enumerate the factors present at any moment in consciousness. The special sensations which form the medium for our connexion with the external world, the organic sensations due to bodily conditions, the impulses and desires which prompt to action, the feelings of pleasure or pain which give tone to each changing state, the

[1] *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Engl. tr., p. 8.

succession of images, the connexion of ideas, the mode of thought—these may be described; but we are aware that the whole is not told. All such descriptions are general; they are not minute enough to render the concrete individuality of our life; in every account, however complete, some elements of the real state are lacking; the analysis is never quite exhaustive. Even if it is his own mental state that the psychologist is analysing he is aware that his analytical knowledge falls short of his immediate experience; there is more in his life than there is in his analysis of it.

In this respect, therefore, the immediate consciousness or intuition of self has a better claim to be regarded as a whole than all the elements taken together which analysis has discovered in it. And there is something else, of far greater moment, which the analysis must always fail to give. This is more difficult to name: for in naming it we are apt to speak of it as if it were one element amongst the others. But it may be described as the sense of life or the sense of self. It is not one factor amongst others—such as sensation or impulse or feeling. For it is something through which all these are—through which they have being. And it is through it that each person has his own individual being and no other, so that my perception of this sound, say, is entirely distinct from yours, even although the most perfect analysis can find no dissimilarity between their respective contents. Thus all the parts which the analysis distinguishes are really in a whole, and the whole is in all the parts. The "spiritual bond," as Goethe calls it, is there, but the analyst does not notice it.

At the same time the method of analysis is not

necessarily hostile to the attitude which looks at the whole. Analysis brings out into relief elements which are in the whole and are important for understanding the whole. There is a danger, of course, of seeing only the elements, of regarding them as separate or independent, and of thinking that they make up the whole. But, if we avoid this danger and never lose sight of the spiritual bond through which the elements are real and one, then our view of the whole is elucidated and its detailed content is recognised without its unity or reality being lost sight of. Even self-knowledge gains in fulness and adequacy by this analysis, that is, by the analysis of the psychologist. This is particularly the case with regard to those factors in the mental life which bring it into contact with its environment. For they lie on the circumference of the self, as it were, where self meets other; and analysis always deals most easily with the region which lies nearest to the surface or circumference; its difficulties increase in penetrating into the inner life; in the centre it is always at a loss; for when centre or subject is reached there is nothing further to analyse, and the mere analyst is tempted to say that there is nothing there at all. Now the self is in continual process of growth; its content expands and is modified, and its powers develop in this process. The growth of the self comes with experience, and its occasioning cause is contact and traffic with the world of things and other selves. Here, therefore, in the changes which arise at the periphery or circumference of the self, analysis is most effective in displaying the new content, and we are most dependent upon it for forming an adequate idea of self. Analysis may thus

contribute new elements to the idea of the whole, though these elements are nothing apart from the "spiritual bond" that unifies them.

The idea of self is founded upon immediate experience of self as a unity or whole of conscious life. We do not approach it from the outside: we have inside acquaintance, because we are it. But our knowledge of anything else—even of other selves—has a different starting-point. It too is founded upon immediate experience; but this immediate experience of an other can only be of the aspect or side of that other which comes into contact with our own life. "No one," said Fechner[1], "can stand at once at the outside and at the inside of the same thing. Therefore can no mind directly perceive another." Our knowledge of other men starts from the same point as knowledge of inanimate things, that is to say, it is mediated and conditioned by sense-perception. Hence the difficulty of interpretation. The primitive intelligence, both of the race and of the individual, tends to look upon every other thing as if it were a self; it is animistic, and interprets the other in the likeness of its own self. Even the mature intelligence may for a moment take the cunningly devised image of a man for a human being, though the mistake is easily remedied by observing the way in which the object reacts to a stimulus. But the possibility of making a mistake, and of correcting the mistake by observing details, shows that our knowledge of the inner life of another starts from and depends upon the expressions of that life as they come before us in perception.

[1] *Elemente der Psychophysik*, vol. I, p. 4; cp. G. H. Lewes, *Problems of Life and Mind*, vol. II, p. 481.

Hence, if we compare our idea of an other self with the idea of our own self, differences are apparent. Both are founded upon immediate experience; but in the one case the immediate experience is of our inner life itself; in the other case it is only of the outward expressions of an inner life. In both cases, however, we are trying to arrive at an idea of an inner life, so that immediate data help us much further in the one case than in the other. In the case of the alien self, we have to depend upon data of sense-perception, as we have not to depend upon them in self-knowledge. These data of sense-perception, indeed, are not apprehended as isolated or distinct units; their distinctness is due to our own processes of abstraction and analysis; and there is, of course, always a danger that some important elements may be overlooked in our analysis. But the other and greater danger in analysis—the danger of overlooking the principle of wholeness or unity—does not arise here. And it does not emerge as a danger simply because the principle of unity or spiritual bond does not reside there at all among the external phenomena open to our observation. The unity of the other self was not present in the immediate experience from which we started, which was of the nature of sense-perception; it is an inner principle hid from the immediate observation of any other mind.

How then can we pass from these immediate external data, which we call the expressions of another self or mind, to an idea of that self or mind? To do so an interpretative conception is needed, such as our own self-experience supplies us with. By its means we make the attempt, by a kind of imaginative insight, to view

the process from the inside as it is for the self expressed in it. And to this method we may, with Bergson, apply the term *intuition*, and say that it requires sympathy. "By intuition," he says, "is meant the kind of *intellectual sympathy* by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible[1]."

In passing from the data of perception to an interpretation of the other self, one or other of two methods may be followed. We may start from the various data in which it is expressed and which our analysis has discriminated, and taking each distinguishable part in turn try to find for it its subjective correspondent—idea, motive, desire, emotion, or the like—and out of these put together synthetically some sort of idea of the other self as a whole. This way is common enough, but it seldom leads to anything like adequate understanding. And yet it does not avoid the use of interpretative conceptions, although it keeps so closely to the elements of the analysis. For each of these elements it has to seek an interpretation in other terms than those first presented—a mental meaning for the external expression. And these mental meanings—whether ideas or desires or feelings—cannot be rendered clearly intelligible unless we can pierce to the inner principle that determined them. For each factor in the expression a fresh reference is made to the mental side; and the resultant idea of the other man's mind or character is a composite product of these various interpretations of particulars.

But it is not thus that the man of sympathetic genius understands others. He places himself imaginatively

[1] *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 6.

within the other's self; he seems to take the other's place, to see everything from his point of view, to think his thoughts and share his feelings and desires. The former and more conventional attitude starts with each external expression in turn, and keeping to it tries to look inward towards what is happening below the surface. The latter attitude also takes its start from the external expression; but the genius of sympathy consists in a swift change of point of view: the observer ceases to be a mere observer, and becomes in thought what he observes: takes his bearings afresh to suit the new position and looks at things from the other man's angle. In doing so he obtains an understanding of the character and conduct of another which is impossible to the observer who restricts himself to noting each separate act and speculating about its motive. At the same time the man of sympathetic genius cannot dispense with evidence. His most brilliant insight is always of the nature of hypothesis: it has not behind it the immediate experience of what he seeks to understand, which everyone has in the case of self-knowledge. Consequently, it must submit to constant testing by empirical data—by the facts, old and new, which constitute the external manifestation of the inner life which he studies.

The further an object is removed in character from the nature of the observer himself, the greater are his difficulties in interpreting its inner life by this process of intellectual sympathy. Hence the risk of failure when we try to catch the elusive 'spirit of the time,' to put ourselves at the mental point of view of children or of prehistoric man, or to understand the inner life of animals or plants. Here—especially in dealing with

primitive man and with sub-human life—there is call for imagination, not only to appreciate the different conditions of the environment but also to enter into the different modes of subjective or organic re-action. When the attempt to understand from the inside was extended to the realm of inorganic things, thinking easily degenerated into the empty scholasticism of attributing potencies to things, although these potencies were only abstract terms for describing the physical process. I question altogether the right to attribute an inner side to inorganic things, and I do so on the grounds that there is no direct evidence for it and that they have no permanent individuality of their own. The case of plant life is different: here there is obviously an individual with an inner aspect. But the attempt sympathetically to understand a life which is without consciousness or any kind of feeling is so difficult, that we are often forced to describe this life in terms which have a clear meaning for us only when they imply consciousness, and then to admit that nevertheless there is no evidence of the presence of consciousness. Even for the higher regions of animal life, our interpretation is based upon the human consciousness, and we are probably unable to determine exactly the kind of modification of our own consciousness which would be required in order to make it a trustworthy guide for understanding any given type of sub-human life.

These considerations all point to the conclusion that the synoptic view of reality or of any portion of it cannot be allowed to work alone without danger to the truth of its conceptions. It must show that its inter-

pretation is accurate by submitting to empirical tests—by its ability to give a coherent account of those facts which it is the business of the analytic understanding to exhibit in detail. This is necessary when we seek to understand any particular object. It is also necessary if our purpose is to form some idea of reality as a whole.

So far, in illustrating and defending the synoptic view, I have been dealing chiefly with certain finite objects. The objects selected have been those to which a being-for-self, and thus an inner life may be ascribed; and it has been contended that, to understand them as wholes, we must seek to penetrate to that inner life so that we may reach the unity which makes into elements of a whole what, judged from the outside only, would be taken as merely parts among which certain regularities may be discovered. But it has also to be pointed out that these finite centres of being are not self-sufficient. Their nature is not simply unrolled from within; it grows and is formed by means of experience and in interaction with the environment. No view of the finite individual can be adequate which does not follow out its connexions with its environment; no view can be trusted at all which neglects them entirely. As was previously remarked, the greatest advance in the general theory of biology which has been made since the time of Aristotle, was connected with laying increased stress on the importance of studying the environment of organic life in order to understand the organism. We must not restrict attention to the finite individual as if it were an independent unit; we must also have a view of the wider whole to which it belongs.

We start with the self. But the content of the self

is due to its experience. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is only the external observer who could think of regarding this content as mere 'mental modifications.' To the subject it has a meaning which points beyond himself and, as it increases, brings him more and more into relation with other things. As Spinoza says, "the mind understands itself better the more things it understands in nature[1]." It is characteristic of Spinoza to regard this connexion of mind with its environment as understanding simply, and to lay exclusive stress upon the natural objects which it knows. But it is unnecessary to follow him in these restrictions. The self finds itself in presence of surrounding reality, and has to make its own way in it as well as to form ideas about it. It is confronted with something that is both an obstacle to its activity and also the medium in and through which its purposes can be realised. It comes also to recognise an objective order—or laws of nature—to which it must conform and upon which it can depend. Further it is conscious of itself as one amongst others of the same kind, all living in the same objective world of matter and law. There is no moment in its career at which it is independent of these other selves any more than a time at which it is independent of the external world; and there is no part of its mental content which is intelligible altogether apart from them. And finally the self is conscious of an objective order of values, which determine what ought to be sought and avoided and thus give direction to the reactions upon external nature and other selves in which life consists.

[1] *De intellectus emendatione; Opera*, ed. Van Vloten and Land, vol. 1 (1882), p. 13.

All these are features in the environment of the self; and a comprehensive view of man must take account of him as a factor in this larger whole. Is it possible to gain any view of this whole which shall be not a mere addition of bit to bit of experienced fact, but an understanding of it as a whole—a synopsis? This is our question. It has been answered in many different ways, and the answers often diverge according to the portion of experience on which the emphasis is laid. The mechanical theory gives an answer which, perhaps without injustice, may be described as external, assuming the sense-object, or something of the nature of matter behind it, as the sole ultimate reality. Intellectualist systems look upon the understanding which reveals the secrets of things as being at the same time their essential nature. But ethical values also belong to the system of reality; and a comprehensive view must include them and show their place in the whole.

Synopsis as a method is herein discussed as interpretation

# XI

## THE INTERPRETATION OF REALITY

In science and philosophy, and indeed in discourse of every kind, we are concerned with our experience. We are thinking about it or its issues or its conditions. And we speak of the purpose of our thought as being to describe or explain or interpret its object. The use of these different terms indicates differences in our way of thinking or in the end which that thinking seeks to achieve. But the differences are not marked with any accuracy, and in common usage the terms are apt to overlap; nor is there any accepted definition of their exact signification. An attempt may be made, however, to fix their meanings as nearly as possible and in particular to bring out the nature of the process of interpretation.

A famous argument begins with the supposition that, in crossing a heath, a man finds a watch upon the ground and proceeds to ask himself how it came to be there. The argument has served its purpose and need not be repeated; but the illustration may be used again. Let us suppose that the traveller has never seen a watch before. What are the things which he will seek to find out about it? He observes its shape and size, the case and glass and dial; he opens it and sees the internal mechanism, each part of which and the relative positions of the parts may be examined by him. He identifies the

different metals, other examples of which may be supposed already known to him; he observes the movements of the spring and wheels, and, continuing his examination, finds that the hands on the dial are also in motion and that their movements correspond in a regular way with the motion of the parts inside the case. The record of this examination, or of any portion of it, is a description of the watch. The description may be more or less complete and more or less exact. The primary form of description is an account which will enable us to form a mental picture or image of the object, so that we may be able to identify it at sight. Even this purpose may not be easily achieved when two or more objects resemble one another closely. A very minute examination might be required to distinguish two blades of grass or two watches turned out at the same factory. Always our descriptions of objects are only approximately complete. Besides, completeness may not be our ideal, nor the distinction of this object from others like it our purpose. Our traveller, for instance, may be interested in the different metals which he finds in the watch and his description of it may be an account of the parts of brass and steel and silver or gold which it contains, their shape and weight. Or he may be more particularly interested in the movements which he observes and he may arrive at a highly abstract account of them which, so far as he can see, describes what actually takes place and can yet be set forth in precise mathematical formulæ. Further experience will show him that the mechanism of the watch, instead of distinguishing this particular object, is common to a number of other objects which he afterwards meets with. Such a description does not

aim at completeness, though it does aim at exactness. It is abstract in so far as it disregards the qualities of the material substances present and is restricted to their movements; and it is general in that it is equally applicable to an indefinite number of other instances.

When an explanation, rather than a description, is asked for, the question can usually be put in the form —not What is it that is there? but—How did it come about? Our traveller, for example, may ask how the watch came to be where it was found, and he may be satisfied with the answer that it was dropped by a previous passer-by in a careless attempt to return it to his pocket. This is the cause of its lying on the heath, and the cause is accepted as a sufficient explanation. Or he may ask how the hands come to move as they do, and he may be satisfied when he finds out that they are connected with the internal mechanism in such a way that the winding of the watch issues in a series of movements which determine the position of the hands on the dial. Here again the cause is given and accepted as the explanation.

According to this view a description tells simply what there is and what is happening, whereas an explanation traces events to their causes. The discovery of the cause would thus give the differentia which marks off an explanation from a description. But, when we press further this method of drawing the distinction, we are faced with the difficulty of determining the nature of a cause. Now the term 'cause,' as commonly defined for the purposes of scientific investigation, signifies nothing more than a certain uniform sequence or order. The explanation therefore would seem to be simply a

generalised description; and the only distinction between description and explanation will be that in the latter the event is classified or shown to be a particular instance of a general rule which holds of all similar instances in like conditions. The explanation consists in a reference to the general formula, valid for many other cases, under which the particular event may be brought. This view is the basis of the descriptive theory of scientific concepts. It is not necessary to examine it here[1]; but it agrees with what has been already said[2] as to the interest of science being in the general or universal, not in the individual.

A different kind of question is put and a different kind of answer expected when the finder of the watch proceeds to ask, Why this complicated piece of machinery? He may discover, or some one may inform him, that its purpose is to tell the time of day; and with this answer he may be satisfied; it interprets to him the meaning of the watch. This process of interpretation needs further consideration.

The process of interpretation is exemplified most simply in translating from a foreign language. An explorer discovers an ancient monument inscribed with characters which have, as he suspects, a meaning, but a meaning unintelligible to him. A scholar is then appealed to, who deciphers the inscription and translates it into the vulgar tongue. Here, therefore, three things are involved: first, a meaning expressed in terms which are not understood; secondly, the translation of

[1] On the meaning of Cause see below, pp. 314 ff., 424 ff.

[2] Above, pp. 110 f.

this meaning into intelligible terms; and thirdly, the scholar, who is the medium of this translation. Normally, therefore, interpretation is a triadic relation, as Royce calls it[1], and involves the operation of three minds: that of the person who expressed his meaning; that of the person who receives this expression of meaning without being able to understand it; and that of the mediator who interprets to the second the meaning of the first. It is possible, indeed, that the second and third may be the mind of the same person: the explorer may himself discover the meaning of the symbols and then express them to himself in better known terms. Or the first and the third mind in a process of interpretation may be the mind of the same person, expressing itself at successive periods of time: he may first relate a parable and then show its meaning. But what we always have is the expression of a meaning in terms not immediately understood and then the translation of this meaning into another and better known set of symbols. Sometimes both sets of symbols are of the same fundamental kind, as in the translation from one language into another; sometimes they are of different orders, as when the first expression of the meaning is in the form of a fable or parable, and the second describes actual experience.

In rendering one language into another, two processes may be involved—transliteration and translation. When the former is required, the meaning has been expressed at first in a set of visible symbols or letters whose corresponding audible symbols are unknown, and they have to be replaced by other symbols which

[1] *The Problem of Christianity*, vol. II, p. 140.

are familiar to the observer and enable him to pronounce the words. The latter process or translation discloses the meaning of the written or spoken words by rendering them into other and familiar words which suggest a succession of images, or a train of thought, or an emotional experience. Even transliteration, however, may by itself serve to reveal a meaning. A reader of poetry who knows no Greek may be attracted by verses in which there are some Greek words and phrases interspersed in the English context, so that his enjoyment of the whole is spoiled. Two things are needed by him in such a case—a transliteration of the words so that he may be able to pronounce them and thus appreciate the technique of the poem, and a translation of them that he may understand the meaning. But, psychologically, the quality of the sounds is itself part of the meaning. On it depends the rhythm of the line or stanza, and it has a share therefore in the emotional value of the verse. The written characters are mere symbols; but the spoken words have a technical quality of their own which is of the essence of the poetical effect, as much as the ideas or images which the language signifies and which may need the translator.

Language is the most familiar example of symbols expressing meaning. But meaning is obviously possessed by other things than words. A picture, a sonata, a knock at the door, may have meaning. So may natural objects: a heavy cloud may mean rain, or a rise in the temperature of the body be a symptom of disease. In Berkeley's theory of vision we have an interpretation of the whole visible world as a system of meanings—an orderly set of visible signs indicative of other, namely, tactual and

muscular experiences. "The proper objects of sight," he says, "are light and colours with their several shades and degrees; all which, being infinitely diversified and combined, do form a language wonderfully adapted to suggest to us the distances, figures, situations, dimensions, and various qualities of tangible objects—not by similitude, nor by inference of necessary connexion, but by the arbitrary imposition of Providence, just as words suggest the things signified by them[1]." In expounding his theory of vision Berkeley spoke as if the objects of touch had an independent existence which the objects of sight did not possess, and this enabled him to bring out the analogy between things seen and a written or spoken language. But he had reached the further conclusion that all sensible objects are in the same way and in the same degree dependent for their being on mind. If the objects of sight were symbols charged with a meaning beyond their content as sense-presentations, a similar meaning might be expected to be revealed by the other senses, and the whole of nature be interpreted as conveying a meaning. And this was the result of his later thought. "The phenomena of nature, which strike on the senses and are understood by the mind, do form not only a magnificent spectacle, but also a most coherent, entertaining, and instructive Discourse; and to effect this, they are conducted, adjusted, and ranged by the greatest wisdom. This language or Discourse is studied with different attention, and interpreted with different degrees of skill. But so far as men have studied and remarked its rules, and can interpret right, so far they

[1] *Alciphron*, dial. iv, § 10; cp. *Essay towards a new Theory of Vision*, §§ 64–66, 140 ff.

may be said to be knowing in nature[1]." For this is his view of knowledge: "We know a thing when we understand it; and we understand it when we can interpret or tell what it signifies[2]."

In Berkeley's view of interpretation we may find the triadic relation already described. There is (1) the symbol which expresses a meaning or further experience, (2) the meaning or further experience of which it is the expression or sign, and (3) the rendering of the first into the second, which is the central feature of the interpretation. In his earliest statement the first of these consisted simply of visible objects or ideas; they were taken as signs of more stable tangible objects, which formed their meaning. But, in his later thought, the whole of nature is regarded as a system of signs. What its meaning is is not fully explained; but it is clear that, in Berkeley's view, it must be sought in the realm of values. Even the "optic language," he says, "hath a necessary connexion with knowledge, wisdom, and goodness[3]." The interpreter of the language of vision is not Berkeley or any particular philosopher, but all men, who from their earliest years have been unconsciously learning the connexion of sign and thing signified. "If we have been all practising this language, ever since our first entrance into the world: if the Author of Nature constantly speaks to the eyes of all mankind, even in their earliest infancy, whenever the eyes are open in the light, whether alone or in company: it doth not seem to me at all strange that men should not be aware they had ever learned a

[1] *Siris*, § 254. [2] *Ibid.*, § 253.
[3] *Alciphron*, dial. iv, § 14.

language begun so early, and practised so constantly as this of Vision[1]." Berkeley's part was therefore simply to convince men that, when they thought they saw things immediately, they were really interpreting signs: although, having been doing so all their lives, they had come to confuse the sign with the thing signified, and so to imagine that they were only percipients when they were really also interpreters. If Berkeley's analysis of vision is correct, then all men who use their eyes are, it is clear, also interpreters of what they see. But, when we extend his doctrine, as he himself does, from sight and visible objects to all sensible experience and treat the whole of nature as a system of signs, then it is obvious that we pass beyond the range of the plain man's interpretations and into a region where the interpretations even of the experts are not always clear and do not always agree. Thus a problem is set in which the philosopher must act as interpreter and where even the philosopher may not be able to do more than give hints towards a true interpretation. We must therefore examine more closely the nature of the meaning which can be attributed to experience, and also that reference of meaning to its origin in mind which was Berkeley's chief concern.

Berkeley laid stress on the arbitrariness of the connexion between a sign and the thing signified. Visible ideas, he thought, have no connexion with tangible objects either by way of resemblance or by way of causation. They may and do serve to bring to our minds tactual experience; but that meaning must have

[1] *Alciphron*, dial. iv, § 11.

been imposed arbitrarily just as is the connexion between the word table and the object table. In this way the inference to a mind behind the meaning and expressed in it is made easy. But Berkeley was not fully justified in the use he made of this conception of arbitrariness. Strict arbitrariness can be asserted only when a symbol or technical term is deliberately framed for a particular purpose and is selected solely on the ground of its simplicity and convenience in manipulation. Ordinary speech was not framed in this way; both imitation and direct emotional expression entered into its formation, so that the signs have some connexion both causally and by way of resemblance with the things signified. But this connexion does not in any way interfere with their function as signs; what is needed in order that they may serve as a language is simply their habitual suggestion of a definite meaning, or their coming to be deliberately used to express this meaning.

Similarly, Berkeley overstates his case when he argues that sight and touch have nothing in common. It is true that there is little or no resemblance between the visible appearance of a table and its 'feel' to the exploring hand. But the senses have been developed from a common origin, and certain lines of correspondence may perhaps be traced throughout the course of this development; so that an emotional *rapport* is found to exist between the impressions of different senses: Locke's blind man was not so far out when he said that the colour scarlet must be like the sound of a trumpet; both alike have a rousing or stimulating effect. In truth, the presence or absence of resemblance or of causal connexion between the sign and thing signified

does not affect the meaning. The word 'hum' is not less effective as meaning the sound made by a bee on the wing because it has some resemblance to that sound; nor is the visual impression of a round table less truly a sign of the tactual impression because we are able to trace a causal connexion in the development of the two sense-impressions. On the other hand, the symbol $\pi$ means the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle without having any connexion with that meaning beyond its 'arbitrary' selection for the purpose by one mathematician and its acceptance by others. Meaning is independent both of resemblance and of causal connexion and need not be affected either by their presence or by their absence. It is something beyond the immediate content of the sense-presentation, but it does not follow that it is disconnected causally or otherwise with that content. It is only in the limiting case of the deliberate selection of a symbol for a particular meaning that we find complete absence of such connexion, and in this limiting case the connexion is brought about by the mediation of the human mind.

The sign, or expression which conveys a meaning, has always some content of its own apart from the meaning or thing signified. Even the mathematical symbol has its visible character on which its convenience depends, so that the formation and selection of symbols is a matter to which anxious care is devoted. And meaning may be conveyed by a portion of experience which has obvious importance of its own apart from this meaning. Visible phenomena, for instance, are not mere symbols of the tactual experiences which they suggest: as Berkeley put it, they form "a magnificent

spectacle" as well as an "instructive discourse." Indeed, the relation of sign and thing signified can often be reversed. The sight of the objects in a room is a sign of the 'feel' of them and of the resistance to our movements which we might experience in walking about the room: in this way it is a guide to our activity and has meaning for life. But it is equally true that we may explore a dark room by touch and movement and that our tactual impressions teach us what to expect if the light were turned on: tangible phenomena may act as a sign and guide to visual experience, and that will be their meaning in certain circumstances. The relation of sign and thing signified may thus be reversible. The visible appearance means the tangible phenomenon, and the tangible can also mean the visible. The relation in one irreversible direction between a word and the thing or idea it stands for is an inadequate analogy for the wealth of meaning expressed in the world of experience. Further, one bit of experience may be the sign of another, and that of still another, and so on indefinitely. An author expresses a meaning by a series of muscular movements communicated to a pen or pencil; signs are recorded on paper and the document is transmitted to the printer. For the printer it has a meaning, but not the same meaning as it had for the author or will have for the reader. For the printer it is simply 'copy'; each written letter is for him simply the sign of a corresponding type. Other series of muscular and mechanical movements then ensue, as a result of which the printed book passes into the hands of readers to whom the printed signs convey ideas which more or less resemble those which the author wished to convey

in preparing his manuscript. We may trace a causal succession throughout this process, and it has been even sometimes imagined that we might be able to give a purely mechanical description of it. But even if we could do so our understanding of it would remain imperfect. Why this process and not another? we may ask. The whole is a series of stages in expressing and conveying a meaning, from the first movements which fix that meaning in written signs to the later movements which change these signs into others so that the meaning may be more easily and widely apprehended. It begins with a set of ideas which one man wishes to communicate and ends with the apprehension of these ideas by others. What intervenes is a sequence of causes and effects, but it is also a series of signs selected simply for the purpose of conveying the meaning—of acting as an intermediary between the mind of the author and the minds of his readers.

These phenomena which we take as signs of meaning are fashioned by human art; but as we have seen the same process of interpretation may apply to natural phenomena. The presentations of one sense are signs of experiences which the other senses will bring; together they are signs of an orderly objective world in which our lives are passed and our purposes manifested. They reveal the conditions of these purposes and the promise of their fulfilment. All this the environment comes to mean for us. We find in it an orderly procession of events, whose issue is not always plain but is continuously being partially revealed as life progresses. The causal order may itself be said to be part of the meaning which we find in it, but it does not exhaust this meaning. Scientific

explanation finds regularity or uniformity in the scattered fragments of sense-experience, and enables us to predict future experience; it is thus itself an interpretation, though an interpretation restricted within definite limits. Beyond these limits we find other indications of meaning. There are still further aspects of experience—beauty in the colours which have been scientifically analysed into vibrations of an elastic medium or molecular changes in neural matter; truth in scientific theorems and elsewhere; faith, heroism, love in the conduct which the psychologist submits to analysis. These are facts of life as certain as the dance of electrons or the principle of the conservation of energy. And they are not separated from the facts of the sensible world; it is only for a limited purpose that they have been distinguished from it. They belong to the complex of our experience, and we can discover their modes of connexion with the other portions of that experience. This connexion is not merely or chiefly an explanation of how these aspects of value arise, or a view of the way in which they are brought out by the process of events and its causal order. They are principles for the interpretation of experience, and supplement the causal principle of explanation. They reveal a meaning in it over and above the regularity and uniformity with which scientific explanation deals. And the order thus disclosed, in accordance with which our experience may be interpreted, is not of the same fashion as the causal order. It is not limited, for example —so we have already found[1]—by any axiom of conservation. Energy, we are told, is always of the same amount in any isolated physical system: there is no question

[1] Above, p. 178 f.

of more or less. But it is not so with value: its realised amount is subject to the risk of decrease; but it bears also with it the hope of indefinite increase.

When we discover values such as beauty or love or truth in certain events, this is a meaning which the events express to us, and in recognising it we are interpreting them—much in the same way as we interpret the meaning of language. The spoken or written words have no meaning to one who does not understand the language; they need an interpreter. In the same way the difference between the assassin and the saint need not be appreciated by any one who only describes their conduct scientifically from the point of view of the physicist, the physiologist, or perhaps even of the analytic psychologist. It needs interpretation through the divergent values which ruled the two lives. Our understanding of them and of the way in which they differ from one another is not merely a description, nor is it an account of their temporal, spatial, and causal relations; it is an interpretation which discovers the meaning of the facts. In this case and wherever we are dealing with human conduct there is meaning behind the actions, and the observers may discover this meaning. Sometimes they can see it more clearly than it appeared to the agents themselves. It is often so in literature and art. There may be more in the picture or the poem than its maker was conscious of putting into it, as, on the other hand, he may fail fully to convey his meaning owing to imperfect command of his medium. But in all these cases what we have is mind speaking to mind. When we attempt to interpret the non-human environment which lies about

us, the same method is followed, but it is beset by greater difficulties. Without giving good reason for the procedure, we cannot appeal to a mind behind the appearances and ask whether the meaning has been rightly read. Even in works of human art this is not always possible, for the artist may have left no clue to his meaning beyond the work itself; but at least we know that it is the work of a mind that resembles our own.

It is here that the difficulty lies in interpreting the world of nature. We can discover the orderly connexion of its phenomena and speak of our generalisations as laws of nature, and repeated experience confirms our theories. But where can we find an objective criterion for any further meaning which we may read in it or into it? Berkeley's reflexions showed that the orderly connexion of sight and touch has significance for our lives, and that they may be looked upon as sign and thing signified. His view was supported by uniform experience, and at first he dealt only with the relation between two sets of phenomena which were on the same plane of experience—both phenomena of sense. But we seek—and he also sought—to go further than this: to connect sense-phenomena with other and higher levels of experience. And here the appeal to uniform experience is less successful. The older teleologists claimed that all things were made for man, and tried to read the purpose of each natural event. But their principle was without objective confirmation, and subjective desire often influenced their interpretation of details. They were apt to take human needs or desires as the standard for interpreting the world; relying on unstable factors in man's nature as the key to the whole mystery,

they courted disillusion. There is an echo of the old method of interpretation in the assertion now often made[1] that what the philosopher seeks is satisfaction. Even if intellectual satisfaction be meant, the assertion can hardly be taken without qualification. The mind, as Bacon[2] said, "is far from being a flat, equal, and clear mirror that receives and reflects the rays without mixture." The intellect is not only liable to be deflected by the emotions; its own past history may incline it to accept one group of ideas rather than another. Many men receive intellectual satisfaction from something less or something more than truth—from a neat and simple formula, however far short it may fall of nature's subtlety, or from a theory which fits in with preconceived views or with familiar experience. It is not merely satisfaction that is needed, but reasonable justifiable satisfaction; and it is not satisfaction but a rational ground for satisfaction that we should seek. Unless our satisfaction is based upon the nature of reality itself, we are apt to read a wrong meaning into experience—a meaning which experience itself will falsify.

There is more meaning in the world than the orderly connexions which the sciences exhibit. This much is certain. The values, which have been already dealt with, are found by us in the events and order of the world; they are the meaning which the world somehow conveys to us. But mistakes are often made in its interpretation. Are there then any means by which we may guide and test our interpretations, not of particular events only but of the world of experience as a

[1] Even by Mr Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 317.

[2] *De augmentis*, book v, chap. iv; *Works*, ed. Spedding, vol. i, p. 643.

whole? The criteria of moral value have been already discussed in this volume. It remains to consider what criteria there are for an interpretation of the reality which includes moral values as one factor in its constitution.

In the examples of interpretation already given, one portion of experience has always been interpreted by means of another portion of experience; and this must always be our method. We cannot get outside experience altogether and interpret the whole by something beyond it—for there is nothing beyond to which we can appeal. The meaning of the whole can be found only within the whole. The appeal is always to experience—but to experience in the widest sense of the word. All possible experience must be included, and even our most ordinary interpretations pass beyond the actual event to the future of which it is prophetic. And all the aspects of experience which we can apprehend must be taken into account—not merely the simple fact as it appears to immediate perception of things without or of states of mind, but all the relations of objective order to which thought extends, including the laws of logic, of nature, and of value. These must be included in forming an idea of reality as a whole. Hence we may see how, although the meaning of the whole is not to be found in anything outside, it may yet be possible to arrive at an interpretation of reality by means of those ideas which are partially revealed in it and which have been already shown to possess objective validity. An adequate interpretation will consist in bringing these ideas into their true relation with the realm of existing things. Reality is not separated from existence but it is wider than it, for it includes the ideas

through which the meaning or purpose of existing things may be discerned.

Concepts which go beyond immediate experience are always involved in every account which we give of things—whether that account be called a description, an explanation, or an interpretation. And they have been applied to the whole realm of existence. The mechanical theory of the universe is an account of reality determined by purely logical or mathematical conceptions. Naturalism commonly represents the world as ruled through and through by causal connexion. Such accounts may be valid, so far as their positive features go; but they are not exhaustive. They describe facts, and perhaps they explain how facts come to be as they are: and in doing so they utilise ideas or modes of conceiving whose objective validity we are bound to assume. But there is one range of objectively valid ideas which they do not use in the accounts they give of reality, and that is ideas of value. Yet these ideas also have validity as well as the others, and they may not be excluded if our account of reality is to be exhaustive. They are required for its completion. Without them we may be able to answer the questions What? and How? But only through them can we expect an answer to the question Why? They reveal purpose as well as order, and make possible a view of reality of the kind which has been described as an interpretation.

The reason which justifies us in applying moral ideas in interpreting the world is similar to that which justifies us in understanding it as an orderly and causal system. Moral ideas are not a system of concepts without relation to existence. They apply directly to

conscious agents, and are realised in the lives of those conscious agents—lives which are immersed in a material environment and thus connected with the whole physical universe. Morality, therefore, is connected with the realm of existence. The problem is to show the nature of this connexion. The existing world is the scene on which moral ideas seek manifestation. Can we say that they express the meaning, or part of the meaning, of that world?

On the religious view of the world the answer to this question is not in doubt. There may be doubt and divergence of view as to the special form the interpretation is to take, as to whether, for example, a particular providence may be asserted; but there is always confidence that the purpose of God is expressed in the events of the world. His meaning is made manifest there, however slow we may be to discover it. On this view, therefore, we have clearly the disclosure of mind to mind through a medium which needs interpretation. But this clear view is only possible if we have already reached a conviction of the existence of God. It does not correspond, therefore, with the method of approach in the present argument. We are arguing from experience and the ideas involved in experience to a general conception of reality which may issue in theism, but which does not start with the assumption of theism. Accordingly we have first to decide whether the world does express or convey a moral meaning, and only if this question has been decided in the affirmative, may we ask further whether this meaning reveals a Supreme Mind.

The preceding argument has reached this point. We have seen that in reality as a whole moral values

are included, and that these moral values have validity for and are manifested in conscious beings. How these values are related to the realm of existence generally—whether we may speak of them as the meaning which the world expresses in its temporal process, and if so, whether this result implies also a theistic view of the universe—these questions remain. What has been established so far is the legitimacy of an interpretation of this sort if it can be shown to fit the facts.

The objections which have been taken to any such interpretation of reality as a whole are mainly two. In the first place, it is said that it is the result of imagination, not of intellectual demonstration, and gives only a fancy-picture of the world, which may have poetic value but is without objective truth. In the second place, it is urged that it is incapable of verification and has therefore no claim to rank with scientific theories. These objections affect any comprehensive or synoptic view of the world, and it is necessary to see how far they are valid.

1. As regards the former objection, it is true that a synoptic view of reality needs imagination in its formation, but it does not follow that it is therefore divorced from logic or that in this respect its method is unscientific. Certainly, logical deduction will not reach to a view of the whole, for deduction is concerned with general truths valid for a class of things, and the object of philosophy is not things in a class but the whole of reality. Even if it be thought that philosophy seeks the universal, then it must be the highest universal—which could not be the conclusion, though it might be

the premiss, of a syllogism. Nor can the enquiry be an induction which proceeds from an enumeration of similar cases, for here there are no similar cases: the universe is one, and there are no other universes with which it may be compared. But a world-view is not therefore independent of these processes of discursive thought. It may be arrived at after a long intellectual process. Behind it and contained in it lie efforts after the apprehension of facts and endeavours to form conceptions by which these facts may be described. But it is not a mere transcript of presented facts, and it involves imagination. It does not follow, however, that the idea thus formed is merely a fancy-picture. Science also involves a similar exercise of the imagination. If we take any scientific theory, such as the atomic theory, or the electrical theory of matter, or a general formula such as the postulate of the conservation of energy, it is evident that all these are a great deal more than simply conceptual transcripts of the facts. They all point to something behind or underlying the facts of experience by which the latter may be understood. The conceptions they use, also, differ from the facts perceived. Atoms, electrical units, energy are concepts, which could not be formed without adding to and taking away from the material immediately presented in perception; and their formation is the work of imagination.

Thus the logical constructions of scientific theory involve imagination. Nothing generically different is required in the formation of a general philosophical theory, although it may have a wider range than the scientific hypothesis, and it may need insight into

experience of a different kind. Neither in science nor in philosophy, is the work of imagination a mere flight of fancy. It arises out of insight into experience. Only, in philosophy, it aims at a more complete view of experience and in particular does not ignore its value-aspect as science very properly does. But the validity of the philosophical theory need not be inferior, nor does it refuse to submit to the tests which can be applied to it.

2. This brings us to the second objection—that it is incapable of verification. It is chiefly through its capacity for verification that the scientific hypothesis is held to be distinguished from the philosophical and to attain a higher level of certainty. It is worth while therefore to ask what the nature of scientific verification is and whether it, or any similar process fulfilling the same function, can be applied to a speculative view of reality as a whole.

It is clear that a scientific hypothesis deals with a more limited range of experience than the philosophical, and that it is consequently easier to bring to bear upon it the test of agreement with facts. The facility for verification is certainly all in favour of science, and is one reason for its steady progress. Philosophy, seeking a more comprehensive view, has a more complex task; and there are greater difficulties in applying the appropriate tests. But it does not follow that the nature of these tests is essentially different from those applicable to science.

Scientific verification is of two kinds. A fact may be discovered which is inconsistent with the hypothesis formed, that is, which cannot be explained or described

if the hypothesis be true; and as the fact cannot be disputed, the hypothesis must in such a case be relinquished. In this way the refutation of a hypothesis may be effected by the discovery of a single fact inconsistent with it. But the same hypothesis would not have been satisfactorily established if the new fact discovered had been in agreement with it. This would add to the probability of its truth, but it would not, in the strict sense of the word, verify it. This agreement of fact with theory is, however, one kind of verification, as the term is used in scientific method; and, as the facts multiply which agree with the hypothesis, the probability of its truth increases.

But another kind of verification is conceivable, which, when or if attainable, would be of greater importance. Suppose the new fact admitted of one and only one explanation. If it agreed with our hypothesis and disagreed with every other possible hypothesis, then its discovery would be a complete verification of the former. Verification of this kind can be obtained only when every possible hypothesis is before us, so that the new fact can test each of them in turn and refute all but one of them. The method proceeds by exclusion, and its conclusive evidence rests on the assumption that the hypotheses before us are exhaustive —that no other is possible with which also the fact might be found to agree. It is seldom if ever that we can be sure that our list of possible explanations is exhaustive, so that probability nearly always enters to disturb complete confidence in the result. The crucial experiment which decides between two conflicting hypotheses and establishes the truth of one of them proceeds

on the assumption that no other alternative explanations than those before us are possible.

Most of the larger generalisations of science admit of verification of the former kind only. They are repeatedly tested by new facts, and our confidence in their validity increases with the range of facts which we find them capable of describing. The general theory of evolution which we owe to Darwin is mainly supported in this way. The same kind of verification is applicable to such a doctrine as that of the conservation of energy. We do not find facts which refute every theory which may imply the increase or disappearance of energy from the physical system. What we do find is that, however extensive and exact our knowledge of facts, we are not compelled to give up the doctrine: within the limits of accuracy of our observations, it is able to describe new facts as well as old. Each extension of our knowledge can be explained in harmony with it. That it describes the facts up to a certain point is certain; but that it is an accurate account of the energy in the physical universe is not proven, though it may be rendered more and more probable by its agreement with an increasing volume of facts.

Of these two kinds of scientific verification one would give certainty if all possible explanations were exhaustively known, while the other and more common form gathers confirmation from agreement with new facts but never reaches proof. Can the philosopher as well as the man of science avail himself of either or both these kinds of verification for the criticism and confirmation of his hypotheses? We are confronted with different theories concerning the ultimate ground

or principle of reality, and these theories may be tested by their ability to explain the facts—including under 'facts' not only the facts of nature and of personal life but the values found in personal life. We might make a list of these theories, and it is conceivable that all but one of them should be refuted by their inadequacy to describe the facts. It is even possible to obtain a set of facts or ideas which may be used as a crucial test for deciding between two different hypotheses concerning the universal order. The ideas of moral value may be used in this way for the refutation of certain theories. But, as in the case of scientific verification, we cannot claim more than probability for the exhaustiveness of our enumeration of possible hypotheses. We have thus in philosophy, just as we have in science, for the most part to rely on the other method of verification which finds the confirmation of a hypothesis in its ability to yield a consistent explanation of the new facts and classes of facts that are brought to our notice.

The theories about the world which we form have the precision and fixity which are the marks of intellectual conceptions. But our experience is a living growing experience, always producing something new which may be used as a test of the adequacy of the theory. Thus the human consciousness, as it makes its way in the world and seeks to realise its ideals in the environment, produces at every stage in its progress a new challenge to the faith by which it works. The faith has been crystallised into theory; and both faith and theory must meet the challenge. They are tested by their adequacy to this new experience—to the life which is its source. Often in the history of mankind

both the theory and the faith which it expresses in intellectual terms have been shattered in contact with the growing forces of life. At other times the faith may remain intact in its spiritual essence, while the doctrinal forms in which it was expressed are proved inadequate and new forms have to be sought.

As a scientific theory is held to be verified by its ability to anticipate sense-perceptions, so a philosophical theory may be verified by its power to anticipate experience of a wider kind. The faith which lies behind the theory may consist in an immediate attitude of the individual mind to the meaning of things as a whole and may inspire not only intellectual ideas but also the activity in which the individual shows himself as an agent in the world's progress. And this faith may find its characteristic vindication in its power not merely to anticipate but even to create experience.

These considerations are only general, but they may suffice to justify the conclusion that philosophy, however its method may differ from the method of science, does not depend upon the employment of some irrational faculty of apprehension and that for it also the final test lies in experience. Only, experience must not be limited to the phenomena presented to sense-perception and their causal connexions; it must include the values which we recognise and which experience may show: and the view of reality which we seek is one which will comprehend and harmonise the causal order with the order of values. One way in which this has been attempted is to give a causal explanation of value itself. This is the way of Naturalism; and it is assumed here that the theory of naturalism has failed

to justify itself logically. But another way lies open, in which the conception of cause is not taken as the only or the highest conception under which the facts of experience may be grouped. Facts are significant of value, so that we may be led to an interpretation of reality in which the causal explanation, without being discarded, is supplemented by the conception of meaning.

# XII

## THE THEISTIC ARGUMENTS

On the theistic view the world is interpreted as expressing the mind of God. But theism has been reached in various ways at different times. The old proofs for the being of God have long since fallen into disfavour; they have passed the stage in which critical minds find them convincing; and they are approaching the stage in which men generally cease to find them interesting. Opinion has set against them, and is now tending to set away from them altogether as doctrines the life of which has gone out. They were once very much alive, however; and the reason of the changed attitude towards them is itself a question of some interest. This reason is, of course, in the first place, the destructive criticism of Hume and, still more, of Kant. But, although this is the main reason for the neglect of the traditional proofs, it is not a wholly adequate reason. When we look into the Humian and Kantian criticisms we see that they are directed not simply against the old forms of argument, but against any possible arguments for a knowledge of the ultimate nature, or of the whole, of things. Now their attack upon metaphysical knowledge generally has not met with the same wide acceptance as their refutations of the particular theological proofs. From the point of view of an agnosticism, such as that in which Kant's first *Critique* issued, it is clear that

psych, and [redacted]logical belief.



the proofs are without validity. But they are discarded or quietly disregarded by many who do not share this Kantian view of the limits of knowledge, and whose own doctrines are equally open to the criticisms of Kant.

It would seem therefore that Kant's destructive criticism does not altogether explain the existing dissatisfaction with the traditional proofs. The full explanation must be sought further afield, and involves, so it seems to me, the distinction between religious belief and theological argument. In its origin and throughout much of its history, religion (including the belief in God) is independent of the demonstrations of the being of God offered by philosophers and theologians. Hume himself, in his Dissertation on 'The Natural History of Religion,' was perhaps the first clearly to draw attention to the distinction between the historical causes of religious belief and the theoretical arguments which point to theism. He set the example, which has been followed of late with fruitful results, of tracing the early stages of religious belief. He utilised such facts as were at his disposal, and his psychological imagination helped him to fill out the picture. His most important generalisation was that polytheism preceded theism in the order of history. This is an important result, from the philosopher's point of view. It means that the unity of the world-order, which is the first point to be brought out or assumed in the theistic arguments, appears only at a late stage of historical development, and did not give rise to the belief in God. If we compare this result with the view of Hume's earliest English predecessor in the field of comparative religion, we cannot

fail to be struck by the superior insight of the later writer. Herbert of Cherbury's *De Religione Gentilium* broke into a new field of enquiry by its survey of faiths and their development; but its general idea is completely rationalistic and unhistorical. The true and rational conception of God, which holds the first or highest place in his thought, must also, he thinks, have been first in time in the minds of the human race. He holds, accordingly, that all faiths which fall short of or go beyond this pure and rational creed are mere aberrations or corruptions—the inventions of a crafty priesthood. Though he was the first to open up the field of historical religion which later times have cultivated both extensively and intensively, Herbert of Cherbury's fundamental thought was really unhistorical. He did not see the necessity for a clear distinction between the historical succession and the logical order—which is not a succession in time. In this he resembled most of his followers in the age of rationalism, as well as his Scholastic predecessors. And these were the periods in which the traditional proofs were in the ascendant among philosophers and theologians.

The religious consciousness of those periods—Scholastic and Cartesian—had inherited the idea of one God as the creator and ruler of the universe; the historical antecedents of this idea and of the religious consciousness generally were unknown to or ignored by the thinkers of the time. The religious idea of God was taken over by philosophy, without question as to its origin, and used for expressing the final explanation of reality which philosophy was able to give. The procedure was not necessarily vicious. There cannot be

one view valid for religion and another and quite different solution for the philosophical problem. But the procedure must not be followed blindly; philosophy must not take over the religious idea of God without recognising that this idea has been reached on another path than that of rational thought.

Elsewhere[1] I have drawn a distinction between what I have called two ways of theism—the theism of the religious consciousness for which God is in some manner an immediate object; and the theism of philosophical theory in which the idea of God is arrived at by a process of reflective thought and functions as an explanation of reality. The two ways cannot permanently diverge and yet each be valid along its own lines: for the religious consciousness is just one aspect of the human consciousness. But they do not display unbroken harmony. Religion is not the monopoly of speculative thinkers, and the object of common worship at any time may be incredible to the man of trained intelligence. At such times there is strain and conflict between religion and philosophy, and the strain may issue in progress for both. On the other hand, when the religious consciousness and philosophical thinking are directed to the same object, and are at one in their conception of it, we have what is called an age of faith. The Scholastic period is often described as such. The period between Descartes and the latter part of the eighteenth century—the years in which Rationalism was in the ascendant—are not generally described in the same way. They exhibited in an acute form, though on a somewhat limited field, the strain of religious

[1] *Hibbert Journal*, vol. xi (1913), pp. 567 ff.

conflict. And yet, as regards the one point I have in view—the conception of God—this period also might be called an age of faith. For philosophy and religion were then very much at one as to the way in which God was understood and in accepting belief in him as valid.

Thus it happened that, during the period when the theistic arguments, or certain of them, were commonly regarded as sound and convincing, two contemporary characteristics of thought may be noted. In the first place, Kant's criticism had not yet discredited the competence of human reason in questions of metaphysics and theology. And, in the second place, the idea of God was present to thinkers in advance of their argument, and regarded by them as a primitive and permanent possession of the human consciousness, so that they were predisposed in favour of the idea. What they had to do was to demonstrate that this idea had a real object. The objections to which the theoretical arguments were subjected first by Hume and afterwards by Kant weakened the arguments themselves. But the views arrived at in Hume's 'Natural History of Religion' were fitted to strike at the root of something which lay behind the arguments—the idea of the one God, which they took over from the common religious consciousness before going on to prove the divine existence. Hume set out to show that this idea was not primitive and not universal, but the offspring of strange superstitions; and he ended with the suggestion that by "opposing one species of superstition to another," we should "set them a-quarrelling; while we ourselves, during their fury and contention, happily make our escape into the calm, though obscure,

regions of philosophy[1]"—a region in which we may be content to suspend our judgment, seeing that "the whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery."

The investigations into the origin and history of religion which have been carried out since Hume's day have added vastly to our knowledge, but they have not finally removed that perplexity in which Hume found himself. If we ask what is the bearing of the development of religion upon the claim to truth made in religion, we find ourselves confronted by two, or even by three, different answers from those whose knowledge of the subject qualifies them to speak. We have, in the first place, the view that religion had its origin in an attitude which implied misunderstanding of the causal connexions of things, that its history is only slightly, if at all, related to the truth of its dogmas, and that we are even justified in drawing the inference that, whatever purposes it may have served in the past or even may serve in the future, it has no grasp upon truth and its object is illusory. In the second place, other enquirers hold that the religious consciousness has had from the beginning a certain connexion with objective reality, and that the history of religion displays, on the whole, a progressive revelation of this reality. These views are directly opposed; but it is possible to hold a third view according to which the history of religion does not justify any kind of inference either to the truth or to the falsity of religious doctrines.

It does not fall within my plan or my competence to examine these views and to attempt to decide between them. But it is relevant to draw attention to them.

[1] Hume, *Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 363.

They may serve to remind us of the limits of our present enquiry when compared with the whole field of the philosophy of religion. And the difference of opinion which they display has a bearing on the method which it behoves us to adopt. Having regard to the varieties of the religious consciousness, and the problems involved in its interpretation, we cannot simply accept from it the idea of God, as we find that idea at certain times or in certain persons, and then proceed to consider the place which that idea occupies in philosophical or reflective thought, and the grounds for holding that it has a real object. But this is just what was done by those who used the traditional arguments. They began with an idea of God, which they proceeded to define, for the most part without meeting with much controversy, and then went on to give proofs of the being or existence of God. When doubt or difference arises concerning the idea of God itself, the basis of the argument is shifted, and the proofs themselves lose their cogency and may even cease to interest us. Thus it becomes necessary to adopt a different way of approaching the question.

We are seeking to understand reality—if possible, as a whole; and our beginning must be made from reality as it is known to us. We have found that the parts of reality are all connected together; there is no absolutely independent unit among the objects of experience; in this sense, therefore, reality as known to us is a whole. The problem is, How are we to understand this whole? This is definitely a philosophical question, to which theism is one possible answer, namely, that the whole and all its parts are dependent upon one

Supreme Mind. Pantheism is another solution and differs from theism in the thoroughness with which it strips the finite many of every vestige of independence or individuality, and in its reluctance to qualify the One as mind. Still another type of solution may be found in the varying forms of Pluralism, which accentuate the reality of the many in a way which contrasts with pantheism, and either deny the existence of One Supreme Mind or else regard that supreme spirit as only *primus inter pares*.

Each of these different theories is an attempt to arrive at a view of reality as a whole—what has been called a synoptic view. Analysis and synthesis are employed in the theoretical process by which they are reached, but are insufficient of themselves to form such theories. Nor are they on the same level as scientific theories, in which objects are classified and referred to the laws or formulæ which describe them. They are views of the universe as a whole, and the universe cannot be put into a class or compared with other objects: for there are no other objects, and there is no class larger than itself. It is unique, a 'singular event[1],' as Hume called it. Hume's criticism of the cosmological argument will be referred to later. But there is profound truth in this suggestive comment of his. We cannot refer the universe to any class higher or wider than itself; it has no similar and no other; all classes and concepts must be found within it, not outside it. We are seeking to understand it, and such understanding must be from within, not from without. We

[1] Hume's word was 'effect'; but the word is misleading as it implies its correlative 'cause.' See below, p. 316 *n*.

are ourselves parts of the universe, or factors of it, and an outside view of it is impossible. The only understanding of it possible for us must be an inner view—such as all synopsis is—and the synoptic effort will be a struggle to get as near as possible to the heart of the universe, its inner principle. Thus the problem which confronts us should not be put in the form, Does God exist? but rather in the form, How is the universe to be understood and interpreted?

The various theistic arguments commonly put the question in the other way which, I think, is the wrong way. They start with a definition of God, and then distinguish certain lines of argument along each of which we are supposed to arrive at the conclusion that God exists. And each line of argument is supposed to have independent validity and to point to the same conclusion. Further, these lines of argument imitate the part-to-part advance of scientific proof, and the transition in them to a view of reality as a whole is obscure or questionable. We shall therefore expect to find defects in the traditional proofs, though it may turn out that they make important contributions to that view of the whole which we are endeavouring to form. For all the proofs begin from some part in the divided whole of reality and seek in their conclusions to transcend the limited or partial and reach the unconditioned or complete.

This is the case even with the Ontological Argument, though it starts from an idea than which none greater can be conceived. It begins with a distinction which, once made, is always hard to reconcile—the

distinction between idea and existence. With this distinction both Anselm and Descartes began, and the general view of both is that there is one idea so great as to spurn the distinction and necessitate the existence of its corresponding object. Anselm sought long and earnestly for a simple form of proof, free from learned complexity, which would show that and what God is. And what he found is the following argument[1]: (1) God is a Being than which no greater can be conceived. Such is our idea of God. (2) But that than which no greater can be conceived cannot be in the understanding alone (that is, it cannot be a mere idea), for if it were only in the understanding, then something further could be conceived as belonging to it, namely, real existence; and this existence in reality as well as in idea would be a greater thing than ideal existence only. That is to say, if that than which no greater can be conceived were only in the understanding, there would be something still greater than it, which assuredly is impossible. (3) Something, therefore, without doubt, exists than which no greater can be conceived, and it is both in the understanding and in reality.

Such is the sum and substance of Anselm's argument as he first stated it. It was afterwards re-stated by him in somewhat more technical terms in reply to a critic. But even in its first form it cannot be refuted by a reference to the difference between the idea of a hundred dollars and the actual existence or possession

[1] See the extracts in Caldecott and Mackintosh's *Selections from the Literature of Theism* (1904), pp. 1–9, and in Daniels, *Quellenbeiträge und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Gottesbeweise* (*Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, Band VIII, Heft 1–2) (1909), pp. 5–20.

of a hundred dollars. Kant's example, as Hegel remarked[1], appeals at once to the ordinary understanding; for there is nothing the plain man can grasp more clearly than the difference between the idea of money and money in pocket. Hence the success of Kant's illustration, which has been taken as a sufficient refutation of Anselm's proof. Yet it really misses the point of that proof, which was an effort to discriminate between the idea of God and all other ideas. Nor was Kant's argument new. He was anticipated by a contemporary of Anselm's, Gaunilo by name, who used a more elaborate illustration. And this is the way in which Gaunilo answered Anselm. "Some say that there is somewhere in the ocean an Island which—as it is difficult, or rather impossible, to discover what does not exist—is known as the Lost Island. It is fabled to be more amply supplied with riches and all delights in immense abundance than the Fortunate Islands themselves. And although there is no owner or inhabitant, yet in every way it excels all inhabited lands in the abundance of things which might be appropriated as wealth. Now, let any one tell me this, and I shall easily understand all that he says. But if he then proceeds to infer: 'You can no longer doubt that this most excellent of islands, which you do not doubt to exist in your understanding, is really in existence somewhere, because it is more excellent to be in reality than to be in the understanding only, and unless it were in existence any other land which does exist would be more excellent than it, and so that which you have understood to be the best of islands would not be the

[1] *Philosophie der Religion*, 2nd ed., vol. I, pp. 213–14. (Eng. transl., vol. II, p. 353.)

best'—if, I say, he wishes in this way to compel me to assent to the existence of this island, and to suppose that there can be no more doubt about it, either I shall consider that he is in jest, or I shall know not which I ought to consider the more foolish, myself if I grant it to him, or him if he thinks that he has, with any certainty at all, proved the existence of that island. He must first have shown me that its very excellence is the excellence of a thing really and indubitably existing, and not in any degree the excellence of a something false or dubious in my understanding."

Now this illustration, and the criticism it conveys, are not sufficient to refute Anselm's argument, any more than the hundred dollars comparison is. True, I have an idea of an island than which none is more excellent, as Kant had an idea of a hundred dollars than which there were no better dollars in the bank at Königsberg or anywhere else. But then you cannot say that there cannot be conceived anything greater than the most excellent of islands, or the best of dollars, and this is how God is conceived.

Gaunilo's objection, it may be remarked, comes nearer the point than Kant's does. Anselm had argued that existence must belong to one idea, though to one only, namely, the idea of that than which nothing greater can be conceived. To say, as Kant does, that the idea of a hundred dollars does not involve their existence, is quite irrelevant, for we can easily conceive greater things than a hundred dollars, and, in a tolerable coinage, any one hundred dollars is not better than any other. On the other hand, Gaunilo's idea of a perfect island was at least the idea of something perfect or complete

of its kind. Nothing greater of its kind could be conceived. We can however conceive something of a greater kind—perfect of its kind and also of a kind more perfect. And it was only when nothing at all more perfect or greater could be conceived that Anselm's argument applied. Anselm was therefore quite right in replying to Gaunilo that he had missed the point of his argument. It applies only to the absolutely greatest, not to things like islands which may be perfect in some limited respect. And he was quite safe in undertaking that, if his critic could apply his argument to anything else, then "I will both find for him that lost island, and I will give it to him, and secure him against its ever being lost again." According to Anselm there is only one thing of which it can be said that it cannot be conceived in the understanding without actually existing in reality; and this is the greatest thing conceivable.

But, although he has given an answer to his critic, this does not mean that Anselm has made out his case. Because anything else can be conceived without also existing, it does not follow that the greatest conceivable cannot be so conceived but must also exist. In the case of everything else, existence can be separated from essence; but not, he urges, in the case of the idea of God. This is the doctrine as afterwards put succinctly by Descartes, who asserts that existence follows from the essence of God or the Perfect Being just as equality of the sum of its angles to two right angles follows from the essence of a triangle[1]. Existence, that is to say, is one of the qualities which go to make up per-

[1] Descartes, *Meditations*, v; *Philosophical Works*, Eng. tr., vol. i, p. 181.

fection; the all-perfect must possess it as well as the others. This form of the argument, however, is met by the criticism of Kant that existence is not itself a quality or factor in perfection; and this once more might be countered in the same way as before by the assertion that what holds in every other case does not hold in the case of the all-perfect or of that than which there can be nothing greater.

But, although the replies are unsatisfactory, it does not follow that the case of Anselm and Descartes is made out. It is agreed that idea does not involve existence in any case except one: the one case, which is in dispute, being the idea of that than which nothing greater can be conceived, or of the all-perfect. Is there any ground for the assertion that this idea involves existence, although no other idea does? Can we distinguish in this respect between the idea of the all-perfect being and the idea of a perfect island?

The opposition of views can be put more simply and without technicality by a method of statement in which existence may be applied to both the objects compared. When I think of the lost island than which there is no other island more excellent, I may and often do think of it as existing. But because I think of it as existing—vaguely conceived as situated in some undefined part of the ocean—I am not justified in *asserting* its existence, nor do I assert that it exists. Similarly, when I think of God than whom there is no being greater, I think of him as existing. But does that justify me in asserting that he does exist? It is for Anselm and Descartes to show that it does, and why. And this they are never able to do without going outside

the content of the idea with which they started and to which they profess to restrict the argument.

There are two motives underlying the Ontological Argument, and the intellectual affinities of these two motives are not the same. The first is the demand that our highest ideal, the best and most perfect being which we can conceive, shall not be severed from reality; and it is clearly a mistake to clothe such a demand in the dress of an apodictic proof which can be demonstrated from the mere content of the idea. In type it belongs to what is called the Moral Argument, which will be examined later. The other motive is the intellectual desire for completeness in our conceptions; but here we do not begin with an idea separated from reality, and then proceed to argue that it includes reality. The idea has reality from the first, both as my idea and as based on an apprehension of a reality other than the idea, whether of the world without or of the self as living and active. If what is required is to explain the existence of my idea, the argument passes into the cosmological variety with Descartes, when he asks what can have caused this idea in my mind of an all-perfect being. As significant of reality, again, the idea we have of the real world is found to be inadequate to reality as long as there is anything which it does not comprehend; and hence it is expanded to the idea of an *ens realissimum* or of that than which nothing can be greater. In this case also the idea is firmly rooted in existence: the question is whether it has been expanded in a legitimate manner, and especially whether we are logically justified in maintaining that our highest ethical predicates belong to the being that is the ground or principle of the

existing world. And this question also belongs to the examination of the cosmological argument, or of its amplification in the teleological argument.

The Cosmological Argument is not, like the ontological argument, faced by the difficulty of making a transition from idea to existence. It begins with the idea of the world, or of portions of it presented to our experience, so that existence is from the first given with the idea. It connects this idea with the conception of God, and uses the conception of cause as the nexus. God is regarded as First Cause of the world. In the argument put forward along these lines, there are four points that seem open to attack and to defence: (1) the validity of the causal concept in general; (2) the validity of applying it to the world as a whole; (3) the validity of calling a halt in the regress of causes, and saying that, at this particular point, we have reached the First Cause; (4) and the validity of the identification of this First Cause with God.

Without entering upon these various lines of enquiry, we may look upon the problem in a more direct way and ask, To what kind of conception does the interpretation of the world lead us when we try to understand it as a whole? For this question, also, the critical point is the application and meaning of the causal concept.

It is particular events or happenings that give rise to the enquiry into causes. We are impressed by a change, a new fact, and ask for its cause. But, even when another event has been identified as the cause, we have not yet reached science—as the man of science understands the word. Science seeks the universal, and utilises the conception of causation only as a means of

arriving at a universal law or formula. The ideal of all the sciences is a characteristic that has been attained in full measure only by certain branches of physics—the discovery of a formula which will serve to describe the facts already observed and enable us to predict future facts correctly. The sciences aim at expression in mathematical terms, and, when they have succeeded in finding the appropriate formulæ, their work as sciences is done: their universal is reached. If we regard physical science generally as having to do with the world as a whole, in so far as it is material, then its goal will be the discovery of a formula adequate to comprehend and describe all the processes of nature. In this result the time-process becomes unimportant; and the question of a First Cause does not arise, because the causal problem has been transformed and left behind. The one positive result for a more general interpretation is that the physical universe is an orderly system of a very precise kind, its various forms and appearances being capable of determination by a process of rational calculation. However it has come to pass—whether or no it be legitimate to ask the question how it has come to pass—it is a rational system.

At the same time this order describes for us only one aspect of the actual world. It is, in the last resort, merely quantitative. The qualities of things and their differences, the concrete facts of nature and life, remain in their qualities untouched and undescribed by its formulæ. Something has been dropped out in the process of generalisation by which the formula was reached, as something always is dropped out in every generalisation from particular facts. Thus, in any particular sequence of events, we are not merely interested in

the theorem that, in the redistribution of energy, its quantity remains constant; this proposition assures us of order, without throwing any light on the particular quality of the events; it does not exclude the possibility of the same equation being preserved by another alternative sequence qualitatively different; and that there should be change at all is, of course, for it an ultimate fact. The formula gives only the quantity or 'how much' of anything, not its qualitative individuality.

Now even our physical enquiries (as distinct from their results as finally formulated) are never purely quantitative; they are always concerned with concrete and therefore qualitatively determined facts and sequences; this is more obviously true of biological and still more obviously of mental and social investigations. These all proceed on the postulate that each new fact or event has its ground or explanation in something antecedent. The world-process—whether in its physical history or in its human history—would be unintelligible apart from this postulate. Whatever our subsequent generalisation and formulation of the result, our enquiries depend on the postulate that the course of the world is continuous and that its state at any moment finds its explanation, somewhere and somehow, in its immediately preceding state. And, as the time-factor enters here, it is impossible to avoid the antinomy of first beginning or infinite regress.

Hume's reference to the world as a unique or singular event[1] has already been mentioned and its

[1] "It is only when two *species* of objects are found to be constantly conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect presented, which was entirely singular, and could not be comprehended

Cosmological: argues that the world is with a God of power as 'first cause'.
Teleological: looks what the cause is - God of wisdom and goodness.

significance acknowledged. The use which Hume makes of it is to put out of court any interpretation of the world as a whole or enquiry into its cause. We have no ground, he thinks, for saying that it has any cause. The idea of cause is just a name for our subjective tendency to pass to a certain idea when we have frequently had a similar impression in like circumstances. Of two events (that is, strictly, two impressions) one—let us say, heat—has frequently followed the other—say, flame. After the sequence has been often enough repeated, then when the impression 'flame' recurs, we tend to form the idea 'heat'; and so we say that flame is the cause of heat[1].

Now there are two characteristics of this analysis. The first is that the notion cause is made purely subjective, descriptive of a process in our own minds, and that it can have no just claim to be regarded as indicating a connexion in objective reality. The second characteristic is that the notion is derived from an accumulation of instances in our experience—frequently described as uniform or invariable sequence. The latter characteristic is clearly much less essential than the former for the interpretation of objective reality: for if causation has no legitimate application to objective reality at all, it is unimportant whether, in its illegitimate application, it be derived from experience of a

under any known *species*, I do not see, that we could form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cause....I leave it to your own reflection to pursue the consequences of this principle."—*Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, sect. xi, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 148 (*Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 122); cp. *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, part ii, ed. McEwen, p. 44 (*Human Nature*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 398).

[1] Hume, *Human Nature*, book I, part iii, sect. 6, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 87, ed. Green and Grose, vol. I, p. 388.

uniform sequence or not. Nevertheless, in his criticism of the cosmological argument, as in his criticisms generally, Hume applies only the superficial feature of the explanation of causation at which he had arrived, and not its more essential character. There has been only one world in our experience, not a number of worlds which might have yielded a uniform sequence, and therefore we can say nothing about its having a cause; whereas he leaves it to be assumed that of any event in the world, where similar events may be found, we may quite properly ask for a cause. In truth, however, his own analysis leaves him no right to do so. Cause is but a customary tendency due to mental association, and the notion is without objective validity. He saw this himself in his first book, where he was in earnest with his subject, and he acknowledged that his theory left all events in the world loose and separate, so that natural science was involved in the same ruin as natural theology.

Natural science assumes the legitimacy of the causal enquiry not as the consequence of a generalisation from uniform experience, but as a means towards its generalisations. And history—whether it be the history of the earth or of nations—can be a subject of investigation only when the causal principle guides each step in the enquiry. Every event has to be understood as arising out of and determined by something antecedent to it. Here time is implied. But even in this meaning of cause, we must note, the notion of power does not seem to be essential; and the natural sciences have long ago dispensed with it in their doctrine of method. Power is a notion derived from our own conscious ex-

perience when changes follow upon voluntary effort. In nature, however, we observe changes only and not the power that produces them. If the world be interpreted in terms of mind, then it will also be regarded as realising, not only in its regular laws but also in its continuous changes, the idea of a mind to whom this power of realisation will be attributed. But unless and until it is interpreted in terms of mind, it would seem illegitimate to introduce the notion of power in investigating nature. We are limited to the determinate sequence of antecedent and consequent.

When we follow out this causal sequence, it is clear that we cannot avoid facing the difficulty that either the regress must be infinite or else there must be a stage which is cause only and not effect. What is to be said of this ancient antinomy? This much may be asserted of the first alternative. If we say that the regress has gone on from infinity, the position may be maintained; but it is not a solution, it answers no question, gives no explanation or interpretation of the world or its cause. It simply means postponing any answer *sine die*. If on the other hand, we assert a First Cause, then we must mean by cause something very different from our meaning when we say that the state of the world at one moment is the cause of its state at the next. The cause which is not also an effect is a very different conception from the cause which is also an effect of something else. The distinction is not a mere distinction of time; it is a distinction of the ground or reason.

The assertion of a First Cause, therefore, really means that our ordinary conception of cause is inade-

Cause = (1) Sequence.
(2) Agency or power.
(3) Logical.

quate to the explanation of reality as a whole. We have been looking for an explanation by tracing each stage back to its antecedent, and we find or think we find in the antecedent the ground of the consequent. But the explanation is always by something else which stands equally in need of explanation, and therefore is no explanation at all until that something else is explained. To say that the regress is infinite does not give any explanation and only stops the quest for one. To say that there is a First Cause is an awkward expression for the doctrine that the true explanation must be sought not simply in any antecedent, but in some characteristic of the process as a whole. As long as we regard the First Cause as simply accounting for the beginning of the world-history, it fails to account even for that beginning: for we are forced to ask, What made the beginner begin and begin just then? Only the contents of the world can show us that it has a meaning which requires some other kind of explanation than antecedent events. The Cause we seek must be not merely First Cause but Final Cause.

Bearing these points in mind can we say that the cosmological argument proves anything? And if so what does it prove? The argument everywhere depends upon the notion of cause. But 'cause' is used in two different senses, and from one of these senses something essential to the meaning of the term as commonly used has been eliminated. When cause is understood as mathematical physics might use it, causation is reduced to an equation. Not only is the notion of power or force absent from it, but the time-factor also becomes unessential: so that it is probably better not to use the

term 'cause' at all in this connexion. The net result of this mode of enquiry is that the world must be regarded as an orderly system, whose order is open to our understanding. Order, therefore, and an adaptation between this order and the human mind are what we have a right to assert about the world. The latter characteristic connects this argument with the teleological. But, even apart from this adaptation, the existence of order raises the central question. Either it is due to a mind or consciousness by whom it is conceived and made manifest in the facts of the world, or it is not. The former alternative gives an explanation of the order in the world, and we understand the explanation because mind as we know it in ourselves is also a source of order. But it does not justify us in calling by the name of God this mind that controls the world until we are satisfied that goodness as well as understanding belongs to it. Is the other alternative excluded, however? Is it impossible that law or order should itself be the ultimate conception behind which we cannot go? The suggestion is that law in nature, or the order of the world, should be regarded as an eternal principle, like the Platonic ideas, which in some manner determines the way in which things behave and are known by us. The full difficulties of this mode of explanation become apparent only when we take into account the order of values as well as the order of nature: so that for a decision of the main question we are driven beyond the cosmological argument as commonly understood.

Cause has a fuller meaning in the investigation of the historical evolution of nature or of man. When we consider events in their concrete happening, espe-

cially when we seek to understand the active process in which life and mind appear and which they strive to dominate, then the time-problem enters; the order of occurrence is no longer unessential; the sequence cannot be reversed; the cause precedes, and the effect is explained by reference to it. In these enquiries we assume that the present state of anything is to be explained by its antecedent state and by its environment, and as there is no environment for the world as a whole, its present state must be explained simply by its own past. This process of explanation must either go on indefinitely, or else the world must depend upon an ultimate reality to which not the first stage only but every stage of the world's history is due. Here again we are presented with an alternative. But one of the alternatives—that of infinite regress—gives no real explanation. If the explanation of one event, or state of the world, *A*, consists in a reference to a preceding event or state *B*, then we have not explained *A* unless *B* is something that we understand. And if our understanding of *B* consists simply in a further reference to another event or state *C*, and that requires to be explained in the same way, and so on indefinitely—then we have no explanation at all. The assertion of an infinite regress of causes is only a means of putting off indefinitely the answer to an awkward question.

The ultimate reality, to which the other alternative leads us, is not more necessary to explain things in their beginning than to explain any stage in their development. In respect of their dependence on the ultimate reality, the distinction between the creation and the preservation of things is unessential. The cosmological

argument, therefore, so far as it is an application of the time-sequence involved in causation, is in this way transcended. It will depend on the view we reach concerning reality as a whole whether we assert that the world had a beginning in time or not. In either case we shall have no right to speak of time as a reality or form of reality independent of the ultimate. And when time is taken into account, we shall not look in one direction only. It has been too much the habit to explain the world by a backward view only, in the attempt to reach a first cause. The process fronts the future, and we must ask how far the search for a final cause may contribute to its explanation.

For this reason I do not regard the Teleological Argument (as commonly stated) as being in principle distinct from the Cosmological. We have already seen that the elements of value in the Ontological argument are, also, really interpretative of the world if we take that word in its widest sense as inclusive of man, his knowledge and his ideals. So that the various traditional proofs are in essence all of them efforts after the interpretation of the world, and may therefore be regarded as forms of the cosmological argument. But the teleological proof has its distinctive character, and that is to found upon certain special features in the contents of the world, those namely which seem to reveal the presence and realisation of purpose, and therefore to justify an inference to intelligence and to benevolence in the ultimate reality of which our world is the manifestation. It is not possible to do justice here to this important and venerable argument. All that can be done is to bring out some leading features of it, as they appear in the light of recent criticism.

The teleological argument has commonly been narrowed down to the discovery of certain marked adaptations, sometimes fairly obvious, sometimes more recondite, which are displayed in nature. These are taken to prove the intelligence of the Designer of nature, while their service in supplying the needs of man is held to show his goodness. The argument, as is well known, has been profoundly affected by the progress of knowledge, especially in biology. In the first place, the Darwinian theory of natural selection has had the effect of giving an alternative and entirely different explanation of the facts of adaptation. It is admitted that adaptations to the needs of living beings are a pervasive feature of nature; but this, it is held, is the result of an age-long, semi-mechanical, process. The organisms which did not display adaptations have been weeded out simply by their inability to survive in the given environment, while those have flourished best which happened to be best suited to their circumstances. And, in the second place, research, especially into the causes of disease, has revealed countless instances of adaptation whose only human purpose—if we attribute purpose to them—seems to be that they should be the carriers of agony and death[1].

These facts and that theory deal a shrewd and indeed fatal blow to the old-fashioned teleology. The age of Paley and the Bridgewater Treatises is past. If teleological reasoning can be justified at all, it must revise its method and premisses in the light of modern biology.

[1] But this point was not overlooked by Hume, who spoke of "the curious artifices of nature, in order to embitter the life of every living being."—*Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, sect. x, ed. McEwen, p. 126. (*Human Nature*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 436.)

And the revision may show that it is possible even for natural selection to vaunt itself overmuch.

Natural selection may be confidently accepted as a *vera causa*; but we must look more closely to see what it does and what it does not do. I have called it semi-mechanical, for it is not entirely mechanical: it always involves non-mechanical, that is, vital processes on the part of the organism under investigation: it assumes heredity, the tendency to variation, and the impulses directed to self-preservation and to race-continuance, which in various ways determine the behaviour of different organisms. None of these impulses has been reduced to purely mechanical or to physico-chemical processes. It may be argued therefore that, even if external adaptation is absent, life and therefore purpose are always present and assumed. Further, the environment of every organism and every species is also in large measure organic, and therefore exhibits its own internal purposive activities; while there is no proof that even inorganic nature, although a mechanism, may not so far resemble the machines of man's making as to have mind behind it. Taking all the factors therefore which are implied by the term natural selection, we must admit that they involve something more than mechanism.

Of equal importance is the fact that there is much that natural selection cannot do. It is limited to life-preservation, it cannot account for wider interests and their growing ascendancy. Thus we have an interest in knowledge, and, led by this interest, we may become convinced, for example, that the theory of evolution is true, that is, that our idea on this point has objective validity with regard to the cosmic process. But this

theory, or the belief in its truth, does not in any way preserve the lives of those who hold it or give them any appreciable preference in the struggle for existence. The intellectual interest which it exhibits is on a level beyond the operation of natural selection. Here therefore is something of intellectual value to us, and indicative of a harmony between our intelligence and the order of nature; and yet natural selection does not vindicate it. If that is a reason for distrusting it we must relinquish the theory of evolution and with it most of what has been urged in criticism of Paley. But if we still hold to the theory of evolution and reject ordinary teleology, we must nevertheless admit that there is an adaptation (not accounted for by natural selection) between our reason and the actual cosmic order—a design greater than any Paley ever dreamed of. And it is not of intellect alone, but also of morality and the whole world of intrinsic values, that we may have to assert adaptation between our minds and the universal order.

The order of truth which the intellect discovers and the order of moral values which the reason acknowledges are objective characteristics of reality, and they are reflected in the mind of man. Yet natural selection has little to do with their recognition, and nothing at all to do with the presence and power of their higher developments. The selective processes of nature do not specially favour the individuals who cherish these values most highly, or reward them for devoting their lives to the service of such ideals. It is not owing to natural selection, but rather in spite of it, that the mind of man affirms its affinity with truth and beauty and goodness, and, undismayed by opposition, seeks its home among ideals. To

them as well as to nature the mind of man is adapted; and this adaptation can neither be explained nor explained away by biological laws. Its significance will occupy us later.

The second criticism to which I have referred is a more serious objection to teleological reasoning. Throughout the organic world there are many instances of adaptation which have the appearance of being ingenious contrivances for inflicting suffering, and few artifices are more elaborate than those which enable the meanest of organisms to prey upon the lives of men. The facts of dysteleology, as it has been called, cannot be denied; nor is there any royal road to their explanation. They may have been favoured by natural selection; but that does not make it easier to regard nature as manifesting the mind of God. Of these facts in their detail I have no explanation to offer; though I shall have something to say immediately about their general bearing on our problem. But one thing may be admitted at once. The purpose of the world—if it have a purpose—cannot be simply to give the inhabitants thereof what is called a good time. Paley's view of God as an all-wise omnipotent creator, whose sole end in creation was the happiness of his creatures, cannot be the true view. Yet, consistently with the hedonistic philosophy, nothing else can have been his aim; and hence the demand, favoured by J. S. Mill, for a God of limited powers. If the problem of pain can be solved, without denying the unity of power in the universe, it will only be in connexion with a doctrine of values far removed from hedonism. In this way the second criticism of teleology, as well as the first, leads on to the consideration of the moral argument.

# XIII

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

THE three traditional proofs already examined may all be regarded as forms of one of them—the cosmological. Each in a different way is an attempt at an explanation of the world. Even the ontological argument, which stands by itself and has been regarded by Kant as implied in the others, may be looked at from this point of view: for the datum from which it proceeds—the idea of God—is itself a factor in human consciousness and therefore belongs to the world of which man forms a part. And the teleological argument also is allied to the cosmological, and distinguished from the argument that bears this name by proceeding from certain special characteristics of the world-order, and not simply from the fact of there being a world whose existence is to be accounted for.

The same holds of the Moral Argument, as it is called, to which we now proceed. Morality is a fact in the history of the world, and we have found that moral ideas have an objective validity which is such that reality as a whole cannot be understood without them. But morality is only one factor in the whole which theism professes to interpret. We cannot take it alone, as something independent of all other features of reality. And, if we do take it by itself, we cannot expect to reach a demonstration of the being of God along this one line

Morality is alone inadequate to demonstrate the being of God.

of reflexion. The same inadequacy of any single line of argument has been brought out by the examination of the three traditional proofs. They do serve to define our conception of the universe to which we belong; they bring out the insufficiency of any merely material or naturalistic explanation of it; but they do not compel the reason to acknowledge that the world reveals a being whom we may properly call God, and, in particular, they fall short of justifying the idea of the goodness of God. If we are justified in speaking of the goodness of God, then this justification may be expected to come from the moral argument.

The moral argument, in the form in which it is usually presented, is due to Kant, who regarded it as giving us a practical certainty of the existence of God —a problem which the theoretical reason had left unsolved. "Admitting," he said[1], "that the pure moral law inexorably binds every man as a command (not as a rule of prudence), the righteous man may say: I *will* that there be a God....I firmly abide by this, and will not let this faith be taken from me." "If it be asked," he said in another place[2], "why it is incumbent upon us to have any theology at all, it appears clear that it is not needed for the extension or correction of our cognition of nature or in general for any theory, but simply in a subjective point of view for religion, *i.e.*, the practical or moral use of our reason. If it is found that the only argument which leads to a definite concept of the object of theology is itself moral,

[1] *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, book II, chap. ii, § 2 (Abbott's transl. p. 241).

[2] *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, § 91 (Bernard's transl. p. 424).

it is not only not strange, but we miss nothing in respect of its final purpose as regards the sufficiency of belief from this ground of proof, provided that it be admitted that such an argument only establishes the being of God sufficiently for our moral destination, *i.e.*, in a practical point of view." That is to say, the moral law, the inexorable fact of duty, requires us to assume the being of God, not as a speculative truth for explaining nature, but as a practical postulate necessitated by the moral reason.

Kant's argument is open to criticism in detail; but it is remarkable as the first clear statement of the truth that a metaphysical theory cannot be adequate unless founded on a recognition of the realm of ends, as well as the realm of nature, to which man belongs. The theistic belief, which the pure reason failed to justify, was, he thought, demanded by the practical or moral reason. He must have been aware, however, that it is the facts of morality itself—the distribution of good and evil in the world—that offer the most profound difficulty for any theistic view, that every religion almost has moulded its theory in some way to account for these facts, and that some religions have even been willing to say that the things of time are all an illusion, and others to acknowledge a second and hostile world-power, so that, by any means, if it be possible, God and goodness may be saved together. And, shortly before Kant's own day, the moral objections to theism had been pressed home with unexampled power by David Hume. I will quote some sentences from his *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, for they contain the gist of all that has been said on this side of the question before or since. "In many views of the universe, and of its parts, particularly the latter, the

beauty and fitness of final causes strike us with such irresistible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and sophisms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever possible for us to repose any weight on them. But there is no view of human life or of the condition of mankind, from which, without the greatest violence, we can infer the moral attributes, or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wisdom, which we must discover by the eyes of faith alone." "As this goodness [of the Deity] is not antecedently established, but must be inferred from the phenomena, there can be no grounds for such an inference, while there are so many ills in the universe, and while these ills might so easily have been remedied, as far as human understanding can be allowed to judge on such a subject....Look round this universe. What an immense profusion of beings, animated and organised, sensible and active! You admire this prodigious variety and fecundity. But inspect a little more narrowly these living existences, the only beings worth regarding. How hostile and destructive to each other! How insufficient all of them for their own happiness! How contemptible or odious to the spectator! The whole presents nothing but the idea of a blind Nature, impregnated by a great vivifying principle, and pouring forth from her lap, without discernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children!" "Epicurus's old questions are yet unanswered. Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?" "The true conclusion is, that the original source of all things is entirely indifferent to all these principles, and has

no more regard to good above ill than to heat above cold, or to drought above moisture, or to light above heavy[1]."

How is it, we may ask, that reflexion upon good and evil should lead two great thinkers to such opposite results?—that Hume should regard the power behind nature as a life-force regardless of the fate of its offspring, whereas Kant holds that the righteous man is justified in saying "I *will* that there be a God"? The reason is that they were looking from different points of view. Hume, we may say, had regard only to the facts of what men did and what men suffered. His privilege as a sceptic, to which he often appealed, carried some disadvantages with it. He saw the struggle and the pain, the cruelty of the world and the havoc of life, and he hesitated to go behind the facts. Kant may not have shared Hume's view of the morality of nature; but he would not have been appalled by it. Even if a perfectly good deed had never occurred in the world, he said, his position would still stand secure[2]. He was not looking upon outward performance, but upon the inward law of goodness and the power it reveals in the mind which is conscious of it. His reflexions were not based, like Hume's, upon the measure in which goodness is actually realised in the world—as to that he would have been willing to admit that it argues nothing for the goodness of the author of the world. It was the idea of goodness, which consciousness revealed to him, that formed his starting-point. He was aware of a moral law whose validity he could not

Kant begins with reality of moral value.

abstracts itself from world of nature.

[1] *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, parts x, xi, ed. McEwen, pp. 141, 158–9, 134, 160. (*Human Nature*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, pp. 443, 452, 440, 452.)

[2] *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, sect. ii. (Abbott's transl. p. 24); *Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, vol. IV, p. 255.

question, and the recognition of which secured him a position above the play of merely natural forces.

Hence Kant's doctrine of the postulates of the practical reason. The moral consciousness carries with it a demand that reality shall be in accordance with it. And this demand requires us to postulate the freedom of man and his immortality and the existence of the one perfect being or God. We are therefore justified in affirming these as postulates of the moral life. The postulates are all implied in the moral law, but not all with the same degree of directness. Freedom is arrived at in a more immediate way than the other two. It is necessary in order that the moral law may work at all; the moral consciousness depends upon it so closely that its absence would deprive morality of its basis. Were man not free from the compulsion of impulse and desire he would be unable to take the law as the guide of his will. Freedom is, indeed, just the practical aspect of that which in its rational aspect is moral law.

The two other postulates are arrived at indirectly. They are not necessary for the bare validity of moral law. They are required in order to bring about a harmony between morality and the system of nature—to enable the moral order, which is the order of the 'intelligible world,' to become actual in the 'world of sense.' The moral law demands perfect obedience from each individual; and an infinite time is required in order that the individual character with its sensuous desires and inclinations may become fully subject to the categorical imperative: hence Immortality is postulated. The reign of law in nature is not the same thing as the system of moral law; and the agreement of morality

with the laws of actual occurrence can be brought about only by a being who will make happiness follow in the wake of virtue and fashion the order of nature after the pattern of goodness. The ground for postulating the being of God is therefore this, that without God our moral ideas would not be capable of realisation in the world. We ourselves are unable so to realise them—that is, to make the world-order a moral order—because the causal laws which constitute the world of experience are entirely outside of and indifferent to the ethical laws which make up morality. The being of God is thus introduced by Kant as a means of uniting two disparate systems of conceptions, which have been sundered in his thought.

The postulate of Freedom alone, as has been said, is required for the possibility of the moral life itself. The two other postulates are required for the complete realisation of morality in the character of a being with sensuous impulses and throughout a system of things that has been exhibited as without ethical qualities. The infusion of goodness through the non-moral or natural—its victory over impulse and desire and its manifestation in the world of interacting forces—this is the problem that calls for so lofty a solution. The two systems have to be connected externally because they have no common terms. One of them is concerned solely with the causal connexions of phenomena. The other is compelled to seek out their final significance in relation to the ideals which practical reason discloses. Self-consciousness is indeed the fundamental conception in both systems. But in the one it is merely the most general condition of synthesis through whose forms phenomena are apprehended in definite and constant connexions: in the apprehension of

these relations the work of knowledge is completed. In the other or moral system the self is contemplated as a will which manifests itself in character and acts under the conception of a moral law which is the law of its own reason.

Thus the peculiarity of Kant's view is that the two systems—the realm of nature and the moral realm—are at first regarded as independent; they are subject to different laws and their manifestations are of divergent character. Yet the moral order claims unlimited sovereignty, even over the realm of nature, while nature proceeds on its way regardless of the claim. Reconciliation can only be effected by an external power, and God is the Great Reconciler. It would seem as if neither system—neither nature nor morality—by itself stood in need of God; and as if, if they had happened to be in better agreement with one another, God would have been equally superfluous. It is only because they differ, and because there is nevertheless an imperious rational demand for their harmony, that a being is necessary to bring them together sometime; and in this being infinite power must be united with infinite goodness. Goodness is found wherever there is a will in harmony with moral law; but goodness alone does not make God. Power is found in nature; but power alone does not make God. Now, for Kant, nature is a closed and self-consistent system; so is morality. Neither, therefore, proves God; but he is needed to weld them together; and the moral reason demands their ultimate harmony. Hence God is a postulate of the moral or practical reason.

Kant's mistake

II

The special form taken by Kant's moral proof is accordingly a result of the distinction which he draws

God the guarantor of the objectivity of the moral life.

between the two worlds—the sensible or phenomenal world and the intelligible world. The former of these is ruled by mechanical causation, and is the world of natural law; the latter is the realm of freedom and in it moral ideas rule. But each is a closed system, complete in itself. Kant's own thought, however, points beyond this distinction. His practical postulates are a demand for harmony between the two realms of physical causation and of moral ideas, while his third *Critique* exhibits a way in which this harmony can be brought about through the conception of purpose. And here it may be taken for granted that the first distinction on which he founds is not absolute. The order of interacting forces may be a self-consistent system; but it is not a complete account even of the things which form the objects of science, and it is not a closed system. Moral values also—though their system may be self-consistent—do not form a closed system. They are manifested in selves or persons; and persons live in and interact with the world of nature. The causal system may be considered by itself; but the abstraction is made for the purposes of science, and is in this respect arbitrary: it is only one aspect of the world. And moral values, as we have found, are another aspect of reality, dominating or claiming to dominate the lives of persons. We must regard the two systems, therefore, not as the orders of two entirely different worlds, but rather as different aspects of the same reality.

From this point of view the moral argument will require to be formulated in a different way from that in which it is set forth by Kant. It will be necessary to have regard not to a connexion between two worlds, but to relations within the one system of reality; and

we shall have to enquire what kind of general view is justified when both moral ideas and our experience of nature are taken into account. Two things will be necessary to vindicate the position that the world is a moral system, or that goodness belongs to the cause or ground of the world. We must be satisfied, in the first place, that the moral order is an objectively valid order, that moral values belong to the nature of reality; and, in the second place, that actual experience, the history of the world process, is fitted to realise this order. The first of these positions has been already argued at length and may now be assumed in this general form of the objectivity of moral values. The other position involves an estimate of the detailed features of experience which we can hardly expect to be complete or conclusive, but upon which we must venture.

It is possible to regard the power behind nature, in the way Hume regarded it, as a teeming source of life which is careless of the fate of its offspring. Or, to use another metaphor, if we look at life as a composition which (if it have any design at all) must be designed to produce happiness in every part, we shall be likely enough to say that the picture must have come from the hands of an imperfect workman—one of nature's journeymen—if from any mind at all. But behind this argument lies an important assumption—the assumption that happiness is the chief or sole end of creation; and have we any right to make the assumption? Can we even assert that happiness alone would be an end worthy of the artist? If we recognise the supreme worth of goodness, can anything short of goodness be the purpose of conscious life? And goodness has this pecu-

liarity that it needs persons and their free activity for its realisation.

It is not necessary to accept Hume's idea of the vital impulse; but certain views of the world's purpose seem put out of court on any impartial judgment of the facts. The world cannot exist simply for the purpose of producing happiness or pleasure among sentient beings: else every sufferer might have given hints to the Creator for the improvement of his handiwork. Nor can we rest in the old-time conventional theory that pleasure and pain are distributed according to the merit or demerit of the persons to whose lot they fall. The wicked often flourish, and misfortunes befall the righteous. That the course of the world shows some relation between sin and suffering may be very true; but the relation is not a proportion that can be calculated by the rule of three. True, only a brief span of life is open to our observation; and, after the death of the body, it is possible that the individual life may be continued indefinitely, while it is also conceivable that it had a history before its present incarnation. The hypothesis is therefore open that a future life will rectify the inequalities of the present, or that we now suffer in the flesh for the misdeeds of a previous career. In this way it might be possible to vindicate the required proportion between virtue and happiness, vice and suffering. But are we justified in relying on a hypothesis according to which the unknown larger life, which surrounds the present, is contemplated as depending on a principle which the present life, alone open to our observation, does so little to verify?

Let us suppose that the present life is only a frag-

ment of a larger scheme. The hypothesis is at least permissible; for our life bears many marks of incompleteness. We bring—if not character—at least characteristic tendencies with us into the world, and our life breaks off with our purposes unachieved and mind and will still imperfect. But we may reasonably expect that the present fragment should bear some resemblance in its order to the laws or purpose of its neighbouring fragments and of the whole. If the proportion of rewards and punishments to desert can be so imperfectly verified in the rule of this life, have we good reason to suppose that it will be fully verified in another? It may be said that the rewards and punishments of a future life are intended for the guidance of our earthly career. But if reward and punishment in prospect are to be regarded in this way as a means for controlling conduct or training character, do they not lose their effectiveness by being left uncertain, and even by being postponed?

There is, however, one point in this life where nature and morality meet. Every individual life has before it the possibility of good. Other values and the opportunity for them may be distributed more unequally. The enjoyment of art and the cultivation of knowledge stand in need of material instruments which are not, in any abundant measure, at every man's service. But opportunities of realising moral values are not thus limited. They are offered in every sphere of life and in all kinds of material and historical conditions; for their realisation needs the good will only and is not dependent upon circumstances. I do not say that the opportunities are equal, but they are always there: whatever the circumstances, there is an attitude to them in which goodness

can be realised and the sum of realised values in the world increased[1].

The obstacles to the realisation of goodness in the individual proceed mainly from other wills—from the example or influence of other persons. And this fact reminds us that we must not take a merely individual view of things and expect the world to be suited to the interests of each man considered alone. It is not only our joys and sorrows that we share with others. In good and evil also we are members of the family, the nation, and the race. No man lives to himself alone. The evil that he does lives after him, the good is *never* interred with his bones. Men are bound together, working out their own and their neighbours' salvation —or the reverse. The influence of wills that choose the evil in preference to the good cannot fail to affect others in a world of free wills freely interacting. The same reality of influence of one man upon another, but in an opposite direction, is an earnest of the realisation of goodness not only in selected individuals but throughout the human family, and an indication of the true purpose of social order.

These considerations seem to point to a solution of the question before us. The question is whether the facts of our experience, and the course of nature as shown in this experience, can be brought into consistent relation with our ideas of good and evil, so that nature may be regarded as a fitting field for the realisation of goodness. In other words, do the facts of experience

[1] "It is *never in principle* impossible for an adequate solution to be found by will for any situation whatever."—Bosanquet, *Value and Destiny of the Individual* (1913), p. 120.

agree with and support the doctrine of the moral government of the world—an ethical conception of ultimate reality, that is to say—or do they oppose such a conception? The answer to this question depends on the kind of ethical view of the world which we put forward. If by an ethical view of the world we mean the doctrine that the creative purpose must have been to provide the maximum of happiness for conscious beings, or to distribute that happiness equally among them, then it is impossible to regard the world-order as a moral order. Hedonism and theism, once their consequences are worked out, prove to be in fundamental opposition. If pleasure is the sole constituent of value, then this value has been largely disregarded in creation. Nature has been very imperfectly adapted to the desires of man, and human passions have been allowed to poison the wells of happiness. We may try to get out of the difficulty by imagining a creator of limited power and perhaps of defective foresight. But even human intelligence might have foreseen and avoided many of the ills which flesh is heir to; and no one would attribute a higher degree of understanding to man than to his Maker. If mind is really the master of things, then that mind cannot have framed the order of the world with a view to happiness alone[1].

If we take the other and common view that happiness is distributed in proportion to merit, and that the moral government of the world consists in this just distribution, then also it must be said that experience does not support this view, and that it can be brought into agreement with the facts only by the somewhat violent

[1] As Hume recognised, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, part x, ed. McEwen, p. 133. (*Human Nature*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p 440.)

device of postulating another life which differs radically from the present in the method of its government. This view admits a value beyond and higher than pleasure; but it looks upon a due proportion between merit and happiness as the sole and sufficient criterion of the moral government of the world. And therein it displays a narrow and partial view of ethical values. The notion which it follows, and which for it may be said to be the whole of ethics, is the notion of justice; it treats all individuals as simply the doers of acts good or evil, and deserving therefor suitable reward or punishment; it leaves out of account the consideration that individuals or selves, and the communities of individuals which make up the human race, are all of them in the making, and that in some sense they are their own makers—fashioners of their own characters. An ethical view of the world, in which these points are recognised, will not be open to the same objections as before. The world will be contemplated as providing a medium for the realisation of goodness, and not simply as a court of justice distributing rewards and penalties.

I do not assert that this more completely ethical view gets rid of all difficulties. But it does avoid that special difficulty, arising from the unequal distribution of happiness relatively to goodness, which forms an almost conclusive objection to the acceptance of the former doctrine. And that difficulty has been more than any other, or than all others combined, the burden of lament and the ground of pessimism. The struggle and pain of the world are the lot of the good as well as of the evil. But if they can be turned to the increase and refinement of goodness, to the lessening and conquest of evil,

then their existence is not an insuperable obstacle to the ethical view of reality; it may even be regarded as an essential condition of such a view. Account for it how we may, the fact remains that the heroes and saints of history have passed through much tribulation, and that man is made perfect only by suffering;

> But he that creeps from cradle on to grave,
> Unskill'd save in the velvet course of fortune,
> Hath miss'd the discipline of noble hearts.

The character of a free agent is made by facing and fighting with obstacles; it is not formed along the line of easy successful reaction to stimulus. Facile adaptation to familiar environment is no test of character nor training in character. The personal life cannot grow into the values of which it is capable without facing the hardness of circumstance and the strain of conflict, or without experience of failure. Herbert Spencer, in his own way, has preached adaptation to environment as the essence of goodness. Only in a world where all surrounding circumstances correspond exactly with human desire will it be possible for a truly good man to exist. "The co-existence of a perfect man and an imperfect society is impossible," he thinks[1]. But the question at present is not the kind of world in which perfect goodness can exist, but the kind of world in which goodness can begin to grow and make progress towards perfection. Perfect adaptation would mean automatism; it is not and cannot be a school of morality. It is even inconsistent with morality as I have conceived it, which implies freedom and the personal discovery and production of values. And I will hazard the statement that an imperfect world is

[1] *Principles of Ethics*, vol. 1, p. 279.

necessary for the growth and training of moral beings. If there were no possibility of missing the mark there would be no value in taking a true aim. A world of completely unerring finite beings, created and maintained so by the conditions of their life, would be a world of marionettes. They might exhibit perfect propriety of behaviour. They might dance through their span of existence to the amusement of a casual spectator (if such may be imagined); but their movements would be all predetermined by their Maker; they would have neither goodness nor the consciousness of good, nor any point of sympathy with the mind of a free spirit. Not such are the beings whom God is conceived as having created for communion with himself:

> Freundlos war der grosse Weltenmeister;
> Fühlte Mangel: darum schuf er Geister,
> Selige Spiegel seiner Seligkeit[1].

These spirits have had their beginnings at the lowest levels of organic life. They must fight their way upwards through the long stages of man's development. In this progress they have to attain reason and freedom, so that the good may be known and chosen: until, tried by every kind of circumstance, they find and assimilate the values which can transform the world and make themselves fit for the higher spiritual life.

On this upward way man has to pass through many fiery trials. No facile optimism can mitigate the pain of his wounds when the body is racked by disease or

[1] Friendless was the great world-master,
Lonely in his realms above:
Called to life an empire vaster—
Kindred souls to share his love.

the heart is torn with grief or when he listens to the agony of the world in one of the great crises of its history. Yet, in reflecting upon these things, our judgment is apt to outrun our experience. As it is forced upon our view, we seem to bear the whole burden of the pain of the world; all the suffering of creation weighs upon our minds, and the pain seems purposeless and cruel because we observe its effects and cannot divine its meaning. But this great mass of human pain is distributed amongst a countless multitude of souls. Each bears his own burden and every heart knows its own bitterness; but each knows also, better than any other can, what he is able to suffer and to do, and in the darkest hour he may descry a promise of dawn unseen by the onlooker. The spectator who sees the causes of suffering often lacks insight into the way in which it is faced by the soul that is on trial, and fails to allow for the faith that frees the spirit. To estimate the true inwardness of suffering we must not go to the professional pessimist who counts up the grievances of humanity, as often as not from the vantage-ground of a position of personal comfort. The sufferer himself has often a deeper sense of the significance of his experience. "That which we suffer ourselves has no longer the same air of monstrous injustice and wanton cruelty that suffering wears when we see it in the case of others[1]." This was the verdict of a man of letters whose

[1] R. L. Stevenson, *Letters* (1899), vol. I, p. 370. Alongside of Stevenson's reflexion, I may venture to quote the words used by an officer-friend of my own in a letter to his mother written after the death in action of his sole remaining brother: "We can never understand it yet, but it is this same swift bright stroke that seems to summon away the bravest and most precious spirits. I have seen it with my own eyes, and I cannot believe it is cruelty." (June 1917.)

whole life was a battle with disease and suffering, but who did his life's work with high courage and in serenity of soul. Such a judgment cannot lightly be set aside.

Are we justified in saying that the imperfect and puzzling world that surrounds us is an unfit medium for the moral life—if by the moral life we mean the triumph of the spirit—or that it makes impossible the adoption of an ethical point of view in interpreting reality? I do not say that experience of the relation of natural forces to moral ideas and moral volitions justifies of itself the inference to divine goodness at the heart of all things. The mere fragment of life with which we are acquainted is too scanty to bear so weighty a superstructure. All I have argued is that our experience is not inconsistent with such a conclusion. And, if there are other reasons for saying that goodness belongs to the ground of reality, and that the realisation of goodness is the purpose and explanation of finite minds, then the structure of the world as we know it is not such as to make us relinquish this view; on the contrary a view of the kind is supported by the general lines of what we know about the world and its history.

III

The result so far is that the events of the world as a causal system are not inconsistent with the view that this same world is a moral order, that its purpose is a moral purpose. The empirical discrepancies between the two orders, and the obstacles which the world puts in the way of morality, are capable of explanation when we allow that ideals of goodness have not only to be discovered by finite minds, but that for their realisation they need to be freely accepted by individual wills and gradually

organised in individual characters. If this principle still leaves many particular difficulties unresolved, it may at least be claimed that it provides the general plan of an explanation of the relation of moral value to experience, and that a larger knowledge of the issues of life than is open to us might be expected to show that the particular difficulties also are not incapable of solution.

This means that it is possible to regard God as the author and ruler of the world, as it appears in space and time, and at the same time to hold that the moral values of which we are conscious and the moral ideal which we come to apprehend with increasing clearness express his nature. But the question remains, Are we to regard morality—its values, laws, and ideal—as belonging to a Supreme Mind, that is, to God? It is as an answer to this question that the specific Moral Argument enters. And here I cannot do better than give the argument in the words of Dr Rashdall:

"An absolute Moral Law or moral ideal cannot exist *in* material things. And it does not exist in the mind of this or that individual. Only if we believe in the existence of a Mind for which the true moral ideal is already in some sense real, a Mind which is the source of whatever is true in our own moral judgments, can we rationally think of the moral ideal as no less real than the world itself. Only so can we believe in an absolute standard of right and wrong, which is as independent of this or that man's actual ideas and actual desires as the facts of material nature. The belief in God, though not (like the belief in a real and an active self) a postulate of there being any such thing as Morality at all, is the logical presupposition of an 'objective' or absolute Morality.

A moral ideal can exist nowhere and nohow but in a mind; an absolute moral ideal can exist only in a Mind from which all Reality is derived[1]. Our moral ideal can only claim objective validity in so far as it can rationally be regarded as the revelation of a moral ideal eternally existing in the mind of God[2]."

The argument as thus put may be looked upon as a special and striking extension of the cosmological argument. In its first and most elementary form the cosmological argument seeks a cause for the bare existence of the world and man: to account for them there must be something able to bring them into being: God is the First Cause. Then the order of nature impresses us by its regularity, and we come by degrees to understand the principles of its working and the laws under which the material whole maintains its equilibrium and the ordered procession of its changes: these laws and this order call for explanation, and we conceive God as the Great Lawgiver. But beyond this material world, we understand relations and principles of a still more general kind; and the intellect of man recognises abstract truths so evident that, once understood, they cannot be questioned, while inferences are drawn from these which only the more expert minds can appreciate and yet which they recognise as eternally valid. To what order do these belong and what was their home when man as yet was unconscious of them? Surely if their validity is eternal they must have had existence somewhere, and we can only suppose them to have existed in the one eternal

[1] "Or at least a mind by which all Reality is controlled."—Dr Rashdall's footnote.

[2] H. Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil* (1907), vol. II, p. 212.

mind: God is therefore the God of Truth. Further, persons are conscious of values and of an ideal of goodness, which they recognise as having undoubted authority for the direction of their activity; the validity of these values or laws and of this ideal, however, does not depend upon their recognition: it is objective and eternal; and how could this eternal validity stand alone, not embodied in matter and neither seen nor realised by finite minds, unless there were an eternal mind whose thought and will were therein expressed? God must therefore exist and his nature be goodness.

The argument in this its latest phase has a new feature which distinguishes it from the preceding phases. The laws or relations of interacting phenomena which we discover in nature are already embodied in the processes of nature. It may be argued that they have their reality therein: that in cognising them we are simply cognising an aspect of the actual world in space and time, and consequently that, if the mere existence of things does not require God to account for it (on the ground urged by Hume that the world, being a singular event, justifies no inference as to its cause), then, equally, we are not justified in seeking a cause for those laws or relations which are, after all, but one aspect of the existing world. It may be urged that the same holds of mathematical relations: that they are merely an abstract of the actual order, when considered solely in its formal aspect. It is more difficult to treat the still more general logical relations in the same fashion; but they too receive verification in reality and in our thought so far as it does not end in confusion. But it is different with ethical values. Their validity could not be verified in external

phenomena; they cannot be established by observation of the course of nature. They hold good for persons only: and their peculiarity consists in the fact that their validity is not in any way dependent upon their being manifested in the character or conduct of persons, or even on their being recognised in the thoughts of persons. We acknowledge the good and its objective claim upon us even when we are conscious that our will has not yielded to the claim; and we admit that its validity existed before we recognised it.

This leading characteristic makes the theistic argument founded upon moral values or the moral law both stronger in one respect and weaker in another respect than the corresponding argument from natural law and intelligible relations. It is weaker because it is easier to deny the premiss from which it starts—that is, the objective validity of moral law—than it is to deny the objective validity of natural or mathematical or logical relations. But I am here assuming the objective validity of morality as already established by our previous enquiries; and it is unnecessary to go back upon the question. And, granted this premiss, the argument adds an important point. Other relations and laws (it may be said, and the statement is true of laws of nature at any rate) are embodied in actually existing objects. But the same cannot be said of the moral law or moral ideal. We acknowledge that there are objective values, although men may not recognise them, that the moral law is not abrogated by being ignored, and that our consciousness is striving towards the apprehension of an ideal which no finite mind has clearly grasped, but which is none the less valid although it is not realised and is not even

apprehended by us in its truth and fulness. Where then is this ideal? It cannot be valid at one time and not at another. It must be eternal as well as objective. As Dr Rashdall urges, it is not in material things, and it is not in the mind of this or that individual; but "it can exist nowhere and nohow but in a mind"; it requires therefore the mind of God.

Against this argument, however, it may be contended that it disregards the distinction between validity and existence. Why is it assumed that the moral ideal must exist somehow and somewhere? Validity, it may be said, is a unique concept, as unique as existence, and different from it. And this is true. At the same time it is also true that the validity of the moral ideal, like all validity, is a validity for existents. Without this reference to existence there seems no meaning in asserting validity. At any rate it is clear that it is for existents—namely, for the realm of persons—that the moral ideal is valid. It is also true that the perfect moral ideal does not exist in the volitional, or even in the intellectual, consciousness of these persons: they have not achieved agreement with it in their lives, and even their understanding of it is incomplete. Seeing then that it is not manifested by finite existents, how are we to conceive its validity? Other truths are displayed in the order of the existing world; but it is not so with moral values. And yet the system of moral values has been acknowledged to be an aspect of the real universe to which existing things belong. How are we to conceive its relation to them? A particular instance of goodness can exist only in the character of an individual person or group of persons; an idea of goodness such as we have is found only in minds such

as ours. But the ideal of goodness does not exist in finite minds or in their material environment. What then is its status in the system of reality?

The question is answered if we regard the moral order as the order of a Supreme Mind and the ideal of goodness as belonging to this Mind. The difficulty for this view is to show that the Mind which is the home of goodness may also be regarded as the ground of the existing world. That reality as a whole, both in its actual events and in its moral order, can be consistently regarded as the expression of a Supreme Mind is the result of the present argument. But it has not yet been shown that this is the only view consistent with the recognition of an objective morality. Other solutions of the problem have been put forward. We are here at the parting of the ways, where different synoptic views diverge. On the one hand is the theistic view, which is suggested by the highest form of reality known to us in experience, and which finds the ground of all reality—nature and persons, laws and values—in a mind whose purpose is being gradually unfolded in the history of the world. On the other hand are the non-theistic theories, and they also must attempt to reach a consistent view of the relation of the moral order to the realm of existents. They may admit an order of values and may look to the active and rational processes of persons for the more complete realisation of these values and the fuller apprehension of goodness. To this system of moral values they may even be willing, with Fichte[1], to give the name of God; but,

[1] "Jene lebendige und wirkende moralische Ordnung ist selbst Gott; wir bedürfen keines anderen Gottes, und können keinen anderen fassen."—Fichte, *Werke* (1845), vol. v, p. 186.

if so, they will mean by 'God' nothing more than the moral order of the universe, and this moral order will be allowed to have a claim to validity only, not to existence. It will exist only in so far as manifested in the thought or character of finite beings, and no other consciousness than that of finite persons will be postulated. A view of this sort may be pluralistic, postulating a realm of finite minds or monads of some sort as the only existing realities, but beyond them and independent of them truths and values that have somehow being and are valid for existents without themselves existing. Or, if we can envisage a harmony between the moral order and the orders of nature and of truth, and so see all reality as one, the view will take the form of monism or pantheism. The solutions offered by both these views need examination.

Pluralism represents the attempt to find a unitary principle binding nature and value order by assigning primacy to the spiritual it is a species of subjectivism.

XIV

# PLURALISM

The preceding argument has not solved our problem; but it has brought us nearer a solution. We have seen that a complete view of reality must find a place for two things: on the one hand for the realm of persons and events, and on the other hand for the moral order or more generally for the realm of values. If our universe is to be a universe, these two things must be brought into relation so that both together may be regarded as belonging to the same whole. We have found, moreover, that *prima facie*, or in the world as it appears, these two things do not harmonise—that the causal order, which determines the way in which things happen and the actual conduct of persons, does not exhibit any exact correspondence with the moral order, and is often in conflict with it. And we saw that the two orders could only be brought into harmony on the assumption that the agreement of fact and goodness was a purpose which persons had to achieve and which could be achieved only by their free activity in some such world as this. On this hypothesis the causal order will be contributory to the moral order and the world as a whole will be regarded as a purposive system. This is the solution to which the argument points; but it is not the only solution of the problem that has been offered.

Theories of the nature of reality may be distinguished

by the place which they assign to consciousness and purpose in the whole. Either consciousness and purpose are ascribed to the ultimate ground or principle of reality or they are not. If they are, then our theory is some form of theism; if not, not. In the latter case we shall hold that the only conscious and purposeful beings are finite minds such as our own. But there will still be room for difference in our theory according to the place assigned to finite minds in the universe. We may look upon them as the ultimate constituents of reality, or we may hold that they are merely modes or appearances of the one ultimate reality. In the former case our view will be a form of Pluralism: in the latter it will be a monistic view which may be called Pantheism. We have to consider how each view fares in the effort to solve our problem; and in this consideration Pluralism will be taken first.

Pluralism corresponds to a permanent and justifiable attitude of thought, though it has often been submerged by the success of scientific verifications of uniformity or by the prevalence of a monistic philosophy. It has, however, a way of re-appearing after every temporary eclipse. It is the variety and not the unity of the world that first strikes the observer, and the effort to reach a unitary view of reality is constantly faced by the discovery of new factors which seem to break into the harmony of the existing conception. In this secular controversy the Many appear as the enemy of the One; and the latter can compass victory only by showing that it is able to include in its unity each new appearance of diversity. Monism may take many forms, materialist or spiritual;

and the same holds of pluralism. But the essential characteristic of pluralism is the view that the final account of things is to be sought in a great variety of distinct units and not in some more fundamental principle or power which makes them real and also in some sense one.

These ultimate units, however, may be conceived in different ways, thus giving rise to different types of pluralism. In the first place, the ultimate units of all reality may be held to be material atoms. This is the most familiar type of the doctrine historically; and, although the traditional atoms of physics and chemistry have been disintegrated by modern research, the electrons of present theory may easily be utilised for another doctrine of the same type. In the second place, the ultimate units may be held to be of the nature of sensations or presentations, or other elements into which mental states may be resolved by the psychologist. This form of doctrine, familiar to us in Hume and J. S. Mill, may be called psychological atomism. In the third place, it may be said that the ultimate units constitutive of reality are entities of the nature of qualities or concepts which by their diverse combinations appear as the world of persons and things; and this may be called a logical atomism. Finally, it may be said that ultimate reality consists of a multiplicity of spiritual entities, of which the human soul is the highest known to us. This spiritual atomism is the leading type of philosophical pluralism and has been worked out by Leibniz and many others.

Further, it is possible for these various types of pluralism to be combined in different ways. Distinct

units of more than one, or of all, kinds may be postulated. Atoms psychological as well as atoms material may be held to be ultimate constituents of reality. Or logical atoms may be assumed alongside of one or both of these. Or again spiritual units also may be assumed as well as some—or even all—of the foregoing. The possible combinations are numerous. But one question is of decisive interest for our special problem—the question whether minds or spiritual units are recognised as among the ultimate constituents of reality. If they are not, then the primary difficulty for the theory lies in the explanation of the origin and presence of mind in experience. How are we to account for the subjective aspect of experience—for that by which alone material things can be perceived or by which atoms (whether regarded as physical or psychological or logical) can be conceived? These theories have to encounter the familiar objections which have been pressed against materialistic atomism and psychological presentationism, and which have never been satisfactorily met. But it is not necessary here to dwell upon these objections. There is a sufficient reason which excuses us from treading once more this well-trodden ground. Values, as we have already seen, belong to the structure of that reality which we are called upon to interpret; and neither the psychological nor the materialistic form of atomism recognises their place. With the view called logical atomism it is different. Values may be acknowledged among the concepts or qualities to which reality (though not existence) is ascribed. But this view also must be held to be put out of court by the argument of an earlier chapter. For we have found that values—intrinsic values, that is—belong to persons

only. Persons are required for the realisation of the concept value; and it is only in connexion with the lives of selves or persons that values belong to the structure of the universe as the sum-total of existence. Consequently, when our special problem is concerned with the relation of the moral order to the order of nature, only one of the types of pluralism can claim to give the solution desired. Whatever else it may admit or refuse to admit as fundamental, it must at least assert the reality of minds or selves. It will be a spiritual pluralism.

The pluralist, in this meaning of the term, will envisage the world as consisting of a vast number of spiritual units, which have been variously called monads, subjects, souls, or selves. These monads may be regarded either as infinitely numerous or as strictly limited in number, and the view of the universe as a whole will differ accordingly. Their nature also may be differently conceived; and divergent views may be held regarding the extent to which the nature of one of them varies from that of others. Among them the soul or mind of man will almost necessarily be reckoned: for that is the only spiritual being of which we have any direct knowledge; and from it indeed all our ideas of spiritual existence are formed. But it is of course possible that the line of monads may stretch far downwards to inferior grades of spiritual being; and that there may be many monads higher or more developed in their characteristics than the human soul. How far the line extends in either direction it is difficult to say; and genuine pluralists may well differ in opinion. At the lower end of the scale the

limit may only be set by the feeblest kind of subjectivity that can render any experience or reality possible. At the higher end the question of a limit raises a more serious problem. Whatever constitutes the reality of the monad—be it clearness or power or activity or perfection of whatever kind—the degree of that perfection may stretch downwards indefinitely to the naked monad of Leibniz's imagination. Does it also extend indefinitely upwards and find its term only in a monad of infinite intelligence, power, and perfection? If so our universe of spirits includes one which is supreme and will be called God. This indeed was Leibniz's own view. And if the striving of the monad is always towards the higher development or greater perfection of its nature, then this one supreme being which realises all perfection will also be regarded as the final cause of all reality. It has even been maintained, as by Professor Howison, that every possible degree of being is essential to the whole and that therefore a supreme and infinite mind is necessary in the universe. True, finite minds are also as necessary as the infinite mind, so that the view is not identical with the most common form of theism; but it is essentially theistic. In particular, and with regard to our special problem, it provides, by its supreme mind, a home for intrinsic values and a possible means of reconciling them with the empirical order of natural events. For this view, therefore, God is the solution.

On the other hand, it may be held by pluralists that the monads or minds that make up reality are themselves —all of them—finite. However superior in degree some may be to others, each is limited by all the others, so that it is impossible for any one of them to be infinite,

or even supreme in any sense that would justify us in calling it God. In another rendering of the same view, spiritual units or monads may be said to be ultimate differentiations of the Absolute. By the term absolute, as used here, will be meant the whole of reality. It will be infinite if its ultimate differentiations are infinite in number, for it is their sum-total; but infinity cannot be predicated of any one of these differentiations. Among the many minds which make up the universe there can be none with infinite power, else the others would be unessential, and pluralism would be relinquished; none with complete perfection, for that could only be by borrowing the values belonging to all the others; none with a universal reference, for that would be to interfere with the inner life of the others. In this sense, therefore, pluralism will exclude theism; and it is this interpretation of the theory whose ability to meet our question has to be examined.

The universe then, it is assumed, consists of finite spiritual units, among which the human mind alone is directly known to us. There may be other spiritual units of a higher grade than the human mind, as there are almost certainly some of a lower grade, but none among them is of so high a grade as to be infinite or even supreme. The problem now is, Does this theory afford a satisfactory means of explaining the characteristics of reality which have been already brought to light? and this problem may be resolved into two questions: first, does pluralism succeed in explaining reality as a whole (in which value is included)? and secondly, is its own postulate of a plurality of finite minds as constitutive of reality a postulate which can be admitted as in need

of no further presupposition, or does it itself rest upon a more fundamental though implicit condition regarding the nature of reality?

The spiritual monads which are held by pluralists to be the ultimate constituents of reality, and which are best known to us in the form of finite minds, are surrounded by an environment of an orderly kind. In it we have already distinguished the natural, the logical, and the moral orders; and the problem which pluralism has been called in to solve arises from the apparent conflict between the first and last of these orders. But what account does the theory give of this orderly environment as a whole? Either the environment is dependent upon and a product of finite minds, or it is independent of them. Both possibilities must be examined.

The former alternative is the solution offered by idealism or spiritualism, when that theory is interpreted in harmony with pluralism. As mind is the only reality, the environment of mind must itself be mental, a product or mode of mind or in some way dependent upon mind. The universe in its essential nature is simply a community, perhaps only an aggregate, of minds. The facts experienced or observed by any mind, the spatial and temporal order in which they are placed, their causal connexions, and the whole order of truth and of value must be mental formations—without any existence outside the minds that possess them. This view is familiar enough. But it is necessary to put a question about it which is often avoided. How are we to regard the mind which determines or produces this orderly procession of fact under stable laws and ideals, and thus makes a

universe out of chaos or out of nothing? It cannot be a universal mind from which all individual minds receive the content and form of their experience, for this would be a supreme mind on which all the others would depend, as the theist conceives them to do, and the theory would cease to be pluralism in the sense in which pluralism is opposed to theism. Nor can it be some all-embracing spiritual reality, though not conceived as conscious; for, on such a hypothesis also, the theory would no longer be pluralism, but would be a form of pantheism. The mind which determines the facts and order of the world must therefore be, in each case, the finite spiritual unit which is the subject of that experience. Each monad or mind must produce its own universe, unrolling it from within. I, for instance, by means of certain innate forms or modes of consciousness, give spatial and temporal position, causal connexion, numerical distinctness and other relations, to some chaotic impression, or more strictly, to nothing at all, and thereby produce what I call the world. But you in the same way make a world for yourself, and so does everybody else. A radical pluralism would thus seem to require a distinct universe for each distinct monad. As each mind or monad makes its universe, each universe must be distinct: as many minds so many worlds.

Further, within the universe which is the construction or creation of that monad which I call myself, I find that there are many other minds in addition to my own, and these minds are known to me only through their physical expressions—their bodies and the changes in the environment that seem to be due to them—that is, through their connexion with the order of the universe

which is my construction or creation. They are known as having a position in time and space, as interacting, and generally as constitutive parts of my universe, and in these respects must be regarded as my construction or creation. And each of these minds, I am obliged to admit, may retort upon me in similar terms, and claim me as a part of its universe. And in each case the universe cannot be the same as mine; it may be like it or unlike; experience provides no means of telling. Each self has his own universe because he produces it; and if he could only keep to the evidence and to his own point of view, he would suppose his own universe to be all. This thorough pluralism is accordingly unable to avoid Solipsism; and Leibniz evaded the conclusion only because he assumed at the outset that there was a single universe which each monad mirrored with varying degrees of clearness, while it was manifested with perfect clearness in the consciousness of the One Supreme Mind. Unless he had recognised the reality of the supreme mind or monad, it would have been impossible for Leibniz to reconcile with his monadism the doctrine that the universal system is a single reality, a reality reflected by each monad from its own point of view.

It will have been observed that the preceding argument has gone upon a certain assumption. It has assumed, as Leibniz assumed, that the life and experience of each monad are unfolded entirely from within, unaffected by the activity of any other monad. But this assumption has been in general rejected by modern pluralists. The monads or ultimate spiritual constituents of reality are regarded by them as interacting. The monads affect one another by their activity; one produces changes upon

another and assists or hinders the development of its life. May we not therefore look upon the universal order in which all live not as the creation of each and therefore different for each, but as the cooperative product of all, and therefore the same for all?

It is clear that knowledge of nature and of the order of nature is a cooperative product of this kind. When we look at the history of science, we see that the result is due to a long succession of minds working both separately and together, testing the observations and theories of their predecessors, and assimilating easily the discoveries due to the strenuous labour of earlier workers. One builds on another's foundation; conclusions are confirmed and corrected by new methods and acquired skill; conceptions and theorems which required infinite genius for their first elaboration become in time an assured possession of the common intelligence of the race. And all this conscious cooperation, to which we owe the structure of modern science, has at its base a more elementary but necessary sub-structure due to unconscious cooperation. It is by gradual stages that the individual human being of the present day acquires facility in using even the fundamental conceptions of all knowledge. His ideas of space and time, of the causal connexion of events, even of the distinction of thing from thing in the outer world, are neither ready-made for him nor constructed by his solitary intelligence. Their place in his consciousness is due in part to his inherited mental dispositions and in part to intercourse with other minds. In language, the use of which he acquires gradually under social training, he enters into an inheritance of ideas whose form and contents have been

defined by the experience of the race and fixed in words. In acquiring the use of language and the common-sense knowledge of the world, the individual of the present day retraces in his early years a process which had already taken place by slower stages and less direct routes in the history of the race. What the child is deliberately taught was learned by his ancestors by repeated trial and error, but always in a community of individuals to whose intercourse the result was due. The world as known, therefore, has been built up by gradual and combined efforts; it is a social construction.

All this is familiar doctrine and beyond dispute. It is a commonplace also that our understanding of the world is closely connected with the uses to which we put it, and at first almost entirely dependent upon practical interests. These interests are shared by the community in which a man lives, so that he learns to use things and to esteem them at the same time and in much the same way as he learns to know them. In the course of time, as we have seen, new values are discovered in life and new ways of realising them are opened up. In this process also mind cooperates with mind, and the common discovery becomes a common inheritance. The cooperation is indeed even more obvious in the region of values than it is in knowledge. In morality, art, and religion the communal or national factor is more marked than it is in science, and the mutual intercourse of minds can be more clearly traced when it is restricted to the nation or some smaller group than when it is world-wide. Of all human interests science is the most cosmopolitan; under modern conditions the influence of mind upon mind in all the operations of

the scientific intelligence is affected to a comparatively slight degree only by national boundaries. Being so widespread and universal this influence may attract little attention. But nations are much more distinguished from one another by their attitudes to the ethical, aesthetic, and religious values. In this region their special characteristics are brought out, and we see the common mind of the people manifested. The influences which make a national character are pervasive and persistent within the nation, but to a large extent arrested at its frontier. In these influences we may observe the interaction of minds which are closely connected with one another by common history and conditions. Where similar interaction has free play in spite of differences in these respects, the mutual influence may be less obvious, but it is not less real: and this is often the case with knowledge.

It is hardly necessary to have said so much in admitting or defending the truth that our apprehension both of the order of nature and of the moral order is due to a process which has taken place by slow degrees and has been rendered possible only by the mutual influence of mind upon mind. The truth is important; but, however true and important, it must not be mistaken for something else. The apprehension of reality is a cooperative mental construction, but it does not follow that the reality apprehended is constructed in the same way or by the same process. Yet unless we confuse these two things—the apprehension of reality and the reality apprehended—or hold that one follows from the other, we have done nothing to establish the pluralist's thesis that the orders both of nature and of morality are a creation of individual minds acting in concert and competition.

Pluralism either holds that nature and morality are the product of finite minds or it does not. The former hypothesis, which is now under consideration, is neither proved nor made more probable by showing that the apprehension of nature and its laws and of moral values is a gradual attainment and the result of many minds working together. Because knowledge grows from a stage where once knowledge was not, it does not follow that the thing known has been growing at the same time out of nothingness into its full nature. Because many minds unite in bringing the knowledge about, this is no reason against there being a common and objective reality for them to know.

In perception and at every stage of knowledge the monad or mind is always in connexion with an environment. We have passed away from the view that objects known are simply the mind's own content spread out so as to give the illusion of objectivity: for this view, as we have found, can never get beyond solipsism. But what is the environment into relation to which the mind is brought in knowledge? The pluralist who is also an idealist will hold that it is constituted entirely by other minds or at least by monads which are in nature akin to minds, that is, unities with a life or subjectivity at least resembling consciousness and conceivably capable of development into consciousness. On this view the whole world or every part of it is alive. There is no such thing as dead or inert matter—nothing absolutely inorganic. That is only the limit to which consciousness tends when its clearness is gradually diminished, and the limit is never reached. So far as anything exists it has a subjective aspect, and in this subjectivity its true nature lies.

This view has its own difficulties. But they are difficulties not peculiar to pluralism; and it is not necessary to urge them here. So far as the present argument is concerned, we may admit the view that all existing things are monads or spiritual units. The point which concerns us is the way in which pluralism interprets the order or relations in which these units stand to one another and to the universe which they constitute. What we have to consider is the pluralist's interpretation of order or law. One monad or mind learns to understand the order of its environment. This understanding is due to intersubjective intercourse—to the help of other minds with which it is able to communicate in part directly and in part indirectly through tradition. No one mind can be said to have created this order which now many minds recognise. Is it possible to say, nevertheless, that it is their collective creation—that it has been brought about by their mutual intercourse and assistance? If we answer this question in the affirmative, then the creation of this order must have consisted in or been contemporaneous with its discovery; until discovered it was not real; and we shall be committed to the conclusion that mathematical relations and the laws of nature did not hold, or were not operative, until found or apprehended by finite minds. But these relations and laws as we now understand them are conceived as valid independently of our apprehension, and as having been valid through long stretches of time when they were not understood by any intelligences of which we have any knowledge. It is also obvious that finite minds are frequently making discovery of new relations and laws and adding them to the common stock of knowledge, and it is assumed that these new relations

and laws were and are valid before and independently of their apprehension: they are discoveries not inventions. Is it conceivable that this assumption made in all scientific enquiry is nevertheless unfounded and false?

There is one consideration which makes it impossible for us to regard it as false. These discoveries, as we have seen, are due, at least generally, not to one mind only, but to many minds influencing each other so that truth is handed on from mind to mind, and one man lights the torch by which another sees and advances. But this whole process of cooperative investigation and discovery, on which knowledge has been built, has itself been made possible only through the operation of a variety of physical, chemical, and biological laws. Mind acts upon mind in certain definite ways and through certain media only. A slight change in physical conditions, or in chemical or biological processes, and sight, for example, or hearing would have been impossible, so that the ways in which mind has acted upon mind would have been closed. But this interaction has been assumed in our account of the growth of knowledge; in assuming it we have also assumed its conditions; and these conditions are formulated in and imply certain physical, chemical, and biological relations. These relations therefore must have had being—the 'laws' expressing them must have been valid—in order that the process of acquiring knowledge might work, and accordingly before any knowledge was acquired. They cannot have been produced or created by that which they themselves have helped to render possible.

The pluralist resolves all reality into finite centres of life—monads or minds. Our enquiry has shown that he

must also recognise something that is not itself a centre of life, and has not been made by any finite mind or by any finite monad below the rank of mind; and this is the order which connects these minds, and in and through which they live. This order, as has been often said already, may be distinguished into two main kinds. There is first of all the system of relations by which the monads are connected with one another, so that intersubjective intercourse is possible and an objective world is cognised. These constitute the 'laws of nature' in the widest sense of that term, including along with more concrete connexions those abstract relations of concepts which make up formal or logical truth. All these together may be spoken of for the present as the natural order. In addition to this system there is the realm of values which has been found to have validity for personal life, and this for the present may be spoken of under the name of its leading variety—the moral order. The question for the pluralist concerns the position which he is to give in his scheme of things to the natural order and to the moral order. They are not the product of the finite minds into which he has resolved the whole of reality, and yet they are there, essential in the universe and necessary for the functioning, if not for the existence, of finite minds.

This complicated but orderly system remains without any explanation on the pluralistic scheme; it is simply there. It can be understood by finite intelligence, but it has not been produced by it. Yet its nature is such that, were it less complete and universal, we should not hesitate to infer that it was the product of mind. We constantly infer meaning from order, and mind from meaning, and we find the inference justified. There is

only one alternative to this inference, and that is to refer the order simply to 'nature' or the structure of the universe. Whether this too has a meaning and also reveals a mind is just the question which a non-theistic pluralism has to answer in the negative. But in so doing it has also to admit that, after all, finite minds and other monads are not the sole reality: that an unexplained order enters into the constitution of reality. This order controls minds, but it is not itself the product of mind or in any way mental. Minds or monads are said to be the ultimate constituents of reality—the only things ultimately real. Yet surrounding them and controlling them there is an eternal order or law or system of relations. They are the subjects of this system not its masters. It may not have created them but neither have they created it, and they are bound by its canons. And in nature it is alien to them—intelligible, certainly, but not intelligent or in any way akin to mind. Rather, it is a sort of inexorable fate by which they are determined as by an external and unsympathetic power.

The theory, therefore, ought not to be called an idealistic or spiritualistic theory. It starts indeed with a view of reality as of the nature of mind; but it has to add to this something else not of the nature of mind and yet controlling it. That the view should nevertheless be put forward as an idealistic or spiritualistic interpretation of reality may be explained by means of the distinction between two forms of idealism to which I have elsewhere drawn attention[1]. According to one form of idealism,

[1] *Hibbert Journal*, vol. II (1904), pp. 703 ff. The use of the term Platonic for one of these forms of idealism is justified by the argument in the *Republic* and elsewhere. It is not to be taken as implying an historical estimate of the

which may be called the Platonic, the real consists of ideas; and ideas are intelligible realities which are not dependent on minds for their being. It may be true to say of them that they produce minds; but it will not be true to say that minds produce them. On the other form of idealism, which may be called the Berkeleyan, all reality consists of minds and the content of minds; nature and the laws of nature are part of this content, and the orderly system which finite minds did not produce reveals the content and the existence of the infinite mind. Now both these views are able to give an account of reality which, at least *prima facie*, is harmonious and unified. For on both views mind and the structure of the universe are homogeneous. According to Plato the finite mind is not alien in nature to the ideas which it is able to comprehend; according to Berkeley, the order shown in what are called laws of nature is itself a product of that one mind which is the source of all others. But non-theistic pluralism cannot assert this homogeneity between mind and the universal order. It has been thinking along the lines of Berkeleyan idealism in asserting that the ultimate constituents of reality are minds; it has been following out a Platonic doctrine when it allowed or maintained as ultimate the laws or relations which lie beyond and above the power of all finite intelligences. Part of its theory is idealistic in the Platonic sense, and part of it in the Berkeleyan sense. But the whole theory is not idealistic in any single and unambiguous meaning of the term. And there is no means of making it so. It

significance of Plato's thought as a whole: for that purpose his later teaching that soul is the origin and moving power of all that is (*Laws*, x, 896 A) could not be ignored.

has set out from the Berkeleyan standpoint. But, refusing to admit an infinite mind, it is unable to interpret the order of reality in terms of mind.

The difficulty for pluralism becomes greater when it is admitted that the moral order or order of values is a feature which must be taken into account as having objective validity. If it were merely (as it is often held to be) an expression of the experiences or aspirations of finite minds this difficulty would not arise. But we have seen reason to hold, and pluralists often admit, that its validity and objectivity are independent of its apprehension or realisation by individuals, whether alone or in society, so that the question presses of giving an intelligible account of its position. Like the natural order it is not the work of the finite minds which alone are recognised as constituting the universe, and yet it is there—a law holding for these finite minds. It does not even describe their interaction as the laws of nature do; it does not always direct their functioning; but it is a standard for their conduct, and in their correspondence with it they reach the highest end of which their nature is capable. We admit its validity for judgment and appreciation; and its verdict is that finite individuals—that is, the ultimate constituents of reality—have not yet attained their full or true nature as long as their character falls short of the ethical ideal.

We have therefore a new difficulty to face in addition to that arising from the necessity of recognising the natural order as independent of finite minds and yet as belonging to the universe of reality. This latter difficulty compelled the pluralist to admit that his ultimate constituents of reality—minds or monads of whatever sort—

were controlled by something else which was not mental in structure and which therefore was so far inexplicable on his theory. Now, in view of the position of the moral order, he will have to admit that his ultimate reals have not yet attained the reality of which they are capable, and can only reach it through correspondence with an order which is independent of them and is not mental in structure. Here also it is his refusal to admit the conception of an infinite or perfect mind that lands his theory in incoherence.

## II. Types of Pluralism

There are types of pluralism which may be willing to put up with incoherence, even to welcome it. This acquiescence in a universe with ragged edges and imperfect connexion of its parts characterises much of the writing of William James; and when his thinking passes beyond this view it tends to a form of monism[1]. Perhaps it is impossible to refute the idea that the world consists of chance happenings and unstable relations—a view to which the term pluralism might be less unsuitable than any other. All we can do is to seek out the conditions of what happens and trace the relations of things and events, and when we do so our thought is always guided by the postulate that reality is a cosmos or order, and that it is possible for us to understand that order. To arrive at a conception of that order by a complete examination of all the data which experience offers is obviously impossible; and were it possible it would be insufficient, for experience is a process of growth never completed.

[1] *E.g.*, *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 290: "May not you and I be confluent in a higher consciousness, and confluently active there, though we know it not?"

If these data are to be fused into a view of the whole, that can only be done by an intellectual effort which involves imagination, since it passes beyond the scattered facts and seeks to view them as a whole by insight into their unifying principle, while, at the same time, it must submit to be judged by its inner harmony and by its adequate comprehension of the empirical material.

The pluralism which has been examined is a synoptic view of this kind. It interprets the universe by means of the most adequate conception it can reach, and thus endeavours to see all things as modes or products of many minds. As all experience has its being for us only in and through its reference to the unity of the subject, which thus contains it and makes it possible, it interprets the whole choir of heaven and furniture of the earth as owing their reality to mind. And it has the further feature, which may easily be regarded as an advantage, that the highest mental life which it postulates is of a kind or degree which our immediate experience reveals and compels us to admit. Mind or self is the final word. But there are many minds, many selves, all united (somehow) into a universe: whose structure may thus be compared with that of the social orders of college or church or state, in which human minds have expressed themselves and in which they have found a form of unity more comprehensive than that of the individual self.

The view is impressive; but we have found that it is met by one grave difficulty with which it is unable to cope. The social order, it may be said, gives it a cue for the interpretation of the wider reality which surrounds the individual self, and the social order may be regarded as a product of the finite minds of whom,

and of whom alone, reality is said to consist. But the environment of finite minds is something more than the social order. There is the natural order and there is the moral order; and neither of these is due to the activity of finite minds. It has been said[1] that the atom of the materialistic philosophers is in every respect the contrary of the monad of the pluralist, having no spontaneity and being completely determined from without. It cannot therefore function as an ultimate unit of reality in a genuine pluralism. What holds true of the atom without qualification is also true, with a qualification, of finite minds or spiritual monads. They are incompletely spontaneous and partially determined from without—dominated by the order of nature and directed by the order of values. How can we regard them as the ultimate constituents of reality when they are under the power of something other than themselves?

Nature and morality may indeed be held to be the expression of mind—but only of a creative mind. They cannot be accounted for as the expressions of the finite minds which come to recognise them. They are not even the expression of the social mind—if the term may be used. For the communication of mind with mind, and the growth of knowledge and of the social order, imply that the laws of nature and moral values were valid before and independently of their recognition. If these are interpreted as the expressions of mind, that mind cannot be limited in comprehension or power as finite minds are limited. And the pluralist, unwilling to postulate a mind that is supreme or infinite, is forced to admit into his view of the world two different and even

[1] J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends* (1911), p. 51.

discordant kinds of being—the region of finite minds, and the realms of law and values which these finite minds have not produced, but by which they are nevertheless controlled. If he is not troubled by the necessity of explaining this cosmic order, he will remain a pluralist. If, on the contrary, it comes to loom larger in his vision, so that in comparison with it finite minds seem dependent beings, controlled and determined by the order which envelops them, then his theory will be transformed into a species of monism or pantheism.

This monism represents the naturalistic attempt.

# XV

## MONISM[1]

We may recall once more the conclusion which was reached in the examination of the Moral Argument. A comparison was drawn between the order of nature in accordance with which events occur and the mode of action of individual minds on the one hand, and the realm of moral values on the other hand; and the comparison showed that goodness was not realised in the existing world. The problem raised was how to interpret a universe which contained both the order of nature and the order of morality, but in which these two orders were in conflict. It was argued that the problem would be solved if we regarded the course of the world as purposive and held that its purpose consisted in the realisation of those values, especially the moral values, which can be realised only by intelligent agents who are free though finite. According to this solution the universal purpose is held to be the purpose of a Supreme Mind upon whom nature and finite minds depend. The term 'mind' thus used does not imply an exact similarity with mind as we are aware of it in our own life; but it does

[1] The term Monism is used here, as Lotze used it (*Metaphysic*, § 69), for the theory that "there cannot be a multiplicity of independent things, but all elements...must be regarded as parts of a single and real being." For the same meaning Professor Ward prefers the term Singularism, using Monism to signify only the qualitative sameness or similarity (spiritualistic, materialistic, or neutral) of everything that is real. See his *Realm of Ends*, p. 24.

indicate that intelligence, will, and goodness are a less inadequate expression for that which we wish to name than any other expression. The doctrine that the world depends on mind, thus understood, is what is meant by Theism.

There are, however, many other theories about reality; and two of these seemed to call for examination, because they recognise, at least in some measure, the problem which confronts us. According to one of these theories what is alone ultimately real is a plurality of monads or selves, all of them finite; according to the other theory, minds are only manifestations or modes of a single reality which, as a unity or whole, cannot be described as mind but, if any term fits it, may be better spoken of as law, order, or reason—provided these terms are not supposed to imply consciousness. The former is the theory of pluralism; the latter may be called monism or pantheism. It has been argued that pluralism must admit an order of the world beyond and above the finite monads or minds that are said to be the ultimate constituents of reality, and that in this way it tends to pass over into its opposite—monism. The latter theory has now to be examined, especially with regard to its explanation of the relation between the realm of nature and the realm of goodness.

For Western thought Spinoza's system is the typical example of monism or pantheism. It is almost an accident that it is presented, and is commonly regarded by the historians, as being, at the same time, the typical example of rigid demonstration in philosophy. In Spinoza two great qualities were combined: the logical power which has command of abstract reasoning and can weld argu-

ments into system, and, along with this, the vision of a seer. In respect of logic and system, however, it is impossible to regard his work as a faultless specimen of demonstration. He did succeed in developing with far greater consistency than Descartes the conceptions which he found in the latter's philosophy; but his leading positions have only the appearance of being demonstrated: they are already contained in his definitions, especially the definition of substance. His central idea of the All as One is not arrived at by ratiocination but by what he himself calls intuition. This is his vision, his point of view; and the compact body of propositions in which his thought is set forth is his impressive endeavour to show how the facts of material and mental existence can be seen from this point of view and find their place and explanation as modes of one eternal substance or reality.

Nature and God are one—merely different names for describing the sole ultimate reality, as conceived under different attributes or as seen from different points of view; all particular things, whether bodies or minds, can be nothing but modes of this one real being—if indeed they are more than illusions. This is the general thesis of pantheism, and it is not difficult to see that it may be interpreted in different ways according to the aspect from which it is regarded. Looked at from the side of nature the universe may be held to be simply the interconnected world of physical science. On the other hand this diversity itself may be said to be only an appearance; and reality may be interpreted as a unity somewhat after the fashion of the spirit of man, so that it may be possible for man to realise his being in union with the whole. In taking over from Descartes

the doctrine that extension and thought have nothing in common, and in regarding them as two attributes of the One Substance, Spinoza brought into prominence, and attempted to bring into unity, these divergent interpretations. His own thought, however, is in unstable equilibrium between them, and it oscillates uneasily from one interpretation to the other. On the one hand there is the tendency to lay stress on the aspect of extension and of the material bodies which are the modes of substance as extended. This region forms a mechanical system in which causal connexions can be traced and verified. And as the attribute of thought, and minds which are its modes, correspond exactly with this mechanical region, they also may be interpreted mechanically. Thus matter is given the primacy. This primacy is still further brought out by the point-to-point parallelism of matter and mind. For the ideas which make up mind are—all of them—held to be ideas of the body; so that, although they have their own causal sequence, they are bound to body in a way in which body cannot be shown to be bound to mind. In this way it is not surprising that freedom should disappear, and that goodness should be regarded as merely a name for whatever is useful or the object of desire.

But alongside of this there is an entirely different train of thought. Mind, which was first represented as merely an idea of its own body, may yet have an adequate knowledge of the attributes of God or substance; in so far as it has this knowledge it partakes of the eternity of its object; there is something in mind which does not disappear with the body[1]—although mind is only an idea of the body[2]. And its blessedness is consummated

[1] Spinoza, *Ethica*, v, 23. [2] *Ibid.*, ii, 13.

in the intellectual love of God which is a part of the love wherewith God loves himself.

Since all is one, according to monism, it would seem that the system must needs display unity or harmony. But it is equally true for the theory that the One is all, and thus discord lurks within the harmony. The theory is put forward to show the unity behind and beneath all the diversity of appearance in the world; and thus, in an ethical regard, it would seem to point to the moral doctrine that the individual should seek his good in union with the whole. This has indeed been the burden of the teaching of the great pantheistic thinkers of every age and race. Yet there is another side to the doctrine of which some have not been slow to catch hold, and which appeals forcibly to the mass of men when such a doctrine can reach them at all. It is equally part of the theory that all the differentiations of the One are necessary. Whether we call them modes or appearances or even illusions, they cannot come by accident. Each thing and person has its appointed place, and therein—whether as mode or appearance or illusion—is as essential to the One as the One is to it. Degrees of illusoriness, or—what comes to much the same thing—degrees of reality, there may be. But all degrees are necessary, and why should one mode of reality or bit of illusion strive to alter its degree? Such striving must be vain; and if it were not vain, would it not be immoral as disturbing the harmony of the whole in which all degrees are necessary and together make up the perfect One and All?

Neither the philosophical elaboration of pantheism, as we find it in a writer like Spinoza, nor its working as a religious view of the world, can be rightly estimated if

we neglect either of these sides of the doctrine—the side which points to mysticism or that which allies itself with naturalism. The doctrine is a doctrine of unity; but it is a unity which contains in itself all diversity and multiplicity. The absolute One is in strictness ineffable; determination of it implies negation and therefore interferes with its positive perfection; any assertion with the absolute as subject brings the absolute into relation to a predicate and thus destroys its absoluteness. The absolute One should be treated as strictly ineffable. But, if it is to be described at all, it cannot be described otherwise than by means of that manifold world of appearance which is somehow its manifestation. Consequently, the doctrine must be understood by means of the way in which the concrete world is regarded as manifesting the one reality.

A view of the infinite, or of the whole, must be judged by the adequacy of the explanation which it is able to give of the finite or of the parts. We may therefore test it by its application to the different divisions of reality as finite which have been distinguished. In the first place, the realm of material things, living creatures, and persons will be regarded, on the monistic theory, as modes of the being of that one ultimate reality in which everything must have being. This is so far simple, as soon as we have granted that the Absolute can have and has modes. How this is possible—how the absolute One can manifest itself in a finite many—is not a whit easier to understand than the doctrine of creation or any other substitute for it. But particular things undoubtedly exist in some fashion; and, when their existence is explained by the theory that they are modes of a single absolute reality, what we have

to do is to enquire how this explanation explains their particularity and their differences from one another. The problem is therefore how to draw lines of discrimination between the various modes. The distinction between modes of extension, or bodies, and modes of thought, or minds, goes a little way only in this direction; it entails difficulties of its own; and it applies chiefly to that special form of monistic doctrine which arose out of the dualism of Descartes.

Different solutions have been offered of the problem of differentiation. Sometimes a very formal test has been offered: different things are discriminated from one another by their degree of freedom from self-contradiction. The Absolute alone is completely free from contradiction, completely harmonious and self-consistent; particular things, all more or less affected by the vice of contradiction, may yet be distinguished by their measure of comparative freedom from it. Again, the Absolute is the whole of reality: particular things may be distinguished by the amount or degree of reality which they manifest. Yet again, certain pantheistic cosmologies have favoured the doctrine of emanation: from the Absolute all things proceed; those things which are nearer the Absolute in this process of emanation are superior to or more perfect than those things which are further off. I cannot even pretend to examine these different views. But their resemblance to one another may be noted. Finite beings are distinguished according to the measure in which they approach the Absolute conceived as harmonious, as complete, or as first. What right the intellect of one of its finite modes can have to describe it thus or to describe it at all, I do not enquire; for if I did enquire

there would be no answer to the query. But I do ask why we should assume that the finite modes can be distinguished from one another by any comparison with the One or Absolute. Have we any right to assume that any mode can in any way resemble, or be compared with, the Absolute, which is properly ineffable? And when we look closer, is the comparison at all justified? As long as each thing keeps its place, and does not pretend to be what it is not, is there any contradiction in it? Is any one thing less necessary to the whole than any other? and if not, why should we speak of it as less real or having a lower degree of reality? And is not the idea of emanation mere picture-thinking? Can anything be further off than another from that one reality which is in all and is all? To say, as Mr Bradley does[1], that one thing is of a lower degree of reality than another if it would require a greater change to become the whole, seems to me to treat the whole as merely a sum of particulars and not as an Absolute. The Absolute, however defined or however indefinable, cannot be compared with particular things. No conceivable change of any particular thing would bring it nearer to or further from the Absolute. In essence it just is the Absolute appearing in a certain position and with certain determinations which somehow are necessary to its manifestation. It could not be other than it is; and the idea of any change in it making it nearer the Absolute seems to me an invasion of the absoluteness of the Absolute.

The world-view of monism is thus disappointing in the light it sheds on the particulars of experience. Each

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 401.

particular, in its grade and place, is a manifestation of the One which is also All. But no further light is thrown on the interrelations of the finite. Every thing is necessary in its place: mind and matter, man and worm, saint and sinner. Of all these we can only say what experience tells us, that there they are and that they are interrelated according to certain natural laws. Yet here, in what we gather from experience regarding the realm of law, we may find a manifestation of that fixed order which the monistic view leads us to expect. The view tightens the grip of law upon our consciousness, whether the law be that of nature or of logic. The doctrine that all is one can make no terms with contingency. The order of nature must be as necessary as the laws of logic; the processes of mind and society must have the same fixed order as mechanical necessity. Spinoza professed to treat the actions and desires of men just as if the question were of lines, planes, and solids[1]; and, from his point of view, he was perfectly justified; the unity of reality will be interfered with if necessary connexion is relaxed or room is left for individual initiative. If physical science aspires to be a philosophy, and is not content with naturalism, it may find in monism a fitting metaphysical refuge.

But when we pass from these relations to the diverse order of moral values and moral law, difficulties begin afresh. For in morality we have a discrimination of higher and lower, of good and evil, which does not find an easy explanation in a system where everything is equally essential. Yet it is from the ethical point of view that the system has to be approached here, as offering a solution of the problem of reality which might be accepted as an

[1] *Ethica*, iii, pref.

alternative to theism. God (if the word is used at all) may be regarded as the moral order of the universe: though we see now that this can hardly be a complete definition. If the natural order of the universe is real, then God must equally be this natural order; and, similarly, the logical order also. If we do not admit this view, and if we distinguish one of these orders from the others, then we must enquire into their relation. If each order has a different ultimate ground then we have no universe, only a multiverse; if they have the same ultimate ground and it transcends each of them, then we are on the highway towards theism. The doctrine of the All as One must in some way harmonise the natural, logical, and moral orders, and do so without going beyond them to the conception of consciousness or personality.

But can we in this way identify the moral order and the order of nature? "God or nature"—Spinoza's favourite phrase—conveys a meaning; "God or the moral order"—which might represent Fichte's view—also conveys a meaning; but if by "God" we mean at the same time both the natural and the moral order, are we not using the name to cover a contradiction?

It was because Kant was impressed by the discrepancy between the realm of nature with its strict causal connexions and the moral order with its categorical imperative, that he postulated a God transcending the natural order and yet with the power required to bring that order into harmony with morality. When this view came before us in another connexion something was said about the assumed opposition of the two orders and in the direction of qualifying the completeness of this opposition. It may perhaps appear, therefore, as if their unity had been

already in principle admitted. But this would be to misunderstand the drift of the argument. The argument was not that the order of nature and the moral order agree in their manifestations. On the contrary, it started from the fact that there are values which have no actual existence in the world, that the moral law is often broken, that the moral ideal is something unrealised. The argument was that the natural order might be shown to be adapted to the moral order, but only upon two conditions: first, if nature were interpreted as a purposive system, and secondly, if it were recognised that morality required for its realisation the free activity of individual persons. The existing discrepancies between fact (or nature) and morality were admitted. But, if morality is something that needs to be achieved through freedom, then discrepancy must be expected on the way to harmony, and the existing world will need to be a fit medium for the exercise of this freedom and the ultimate realisation of goodness: that is to say, it must be held to be working out a purpose. But these two ideas—purpose and freedom—are just the ideas which are most alien to any monistic scheme. How it deals with them, and how it construes the moral universe without them, has to be shown.

Let us take first the idea of purpose. The two ideas, those of freedom and of purpose, are not dealt with in quite the same way in the monistic scheme. For, while freedom is rejected completely as altogether inconsistent with the unity of the whole, it is difficult to deny the existence of purpose somewhere within the whole, namely, in human activity. At the same time, it is held that to apply the conception of purpose to the world as a whole is illegitimate, being a fashioning of the world after the

likeness of man, who is conscious of the end he seeks before he attains it. Each individual thing, Spinoza thinks, seeks to preserve its being—a truth equally manifested by the stone which offers resistance to the blows of the hammer and by the animal or man that resists disease or death. But it is clear that mere inertia does not express the whole truth about any living being, as contrasted with the inorganic thing. The living being seeks not merely preservation but growth or expansion—greater fulness or excellence of being. Here growth (though growth followed by decay) is the law, as change of a regular kind is the law in the inorganic realm; and in the life of mind the growth is mediated by an idea of value—a purpose. But from our conception of the world as a whole the idea of purpose is excluded. The world must be regarded as eternally complete and not as tending towards a more perfect state.

Purpose then is excluded. The world must not be interpreted by means of the result which it is fitted to bring forth in the fulness of time. Time cannot thus be of its essence. We must view it as it is, and in this view the moment of time at which we regard it is indifferent. It is a whole and, as a whole, must be perfect: for perfection means simply completeness of reality; and all reality is here. As substance or essence, reality is one; as manifestation or appearance—what Spinoza[1] calls *facies totius universi*—it is seen as a changing manifold, but a manifold to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be taken away. It is the perfect manifestation of the One. The whole world is essential to this perfect manifestation; we cannot dispense with any part. Sin and suffering

[1] *Epist.* 64, *Opera*, ed. Van Vloten and Land, vol. II, p. 219.

are there, constitutive fragments of the whole; and as such they must be accepted as belonging to it and contributing to its perfection. From the point of view of natural law this conclusion creates no difficulty. But it is inconsistent with the conditions of moral law, which requires the conquest of sin or evil and the realisation of goodness. The moral order and the natural order are therefore in conflict; and no provision is made for transcending their opposition.

A consistent monism, accordingly, cannot admit the equal validity of the order of natural law and of that of moral law. It must throw over one or the other. It may conceivably adopt the heroic device of discarding the whole realm of nature and the laws of nature as an illusion; but the illusion is too insistent in our experience to allow of this alternative being carried out fully. We cannot look upon the moral order as the only reality. Even if we are willing to declare that pain is no evil, it is harder to say that sin does not exist. Evil of all kinds, sin among the rest, may indeed be held to be mere negation, without any share in positive reality. But, even as negation, evil is a failure to give actual existence to those values which demand realisation; it is still an incompleteness, an imperfection, in the manifestation of the moral order: and as such is an obstacle to consistent monism. And if the natural order is not sacrificed to the moral, then the moral order must be sacrificed to it, and morality must be allowed to lapse into naturalism. This was the line taken by Spinoza when he followed out the implications of his point of view as a logical thinker. Good and evil become, in this way, as they became for him[1],

[1] *Ethica*, iv, pref.

mere figments of our way of thinking—shadows cast by our desires upon the impenetrable barrier of natural law. To the order of the universe as a whole these conceptions do not belong. The claim of the moral order to a validity independent of human feeling and desire is relinquished. 'Ought' and 'value' and 'good' involve distinctions which unfit them as names for a universal objective order. They must be given up when we speak of the whole or of the order which constitutes the whole. Here 'is' is the only word; and our monistic view no longer pretends to make morality an ultimate constituent of reality.

Of course I am drawing out the consequences in a way Spinoza did not do. But I am saying nothing which is not implied in the statements of one portion of his *Ethics*. And we may see a confirmation of the soundness of his logical processes when we observe the fate of monism on the wider field of the history of human and popular creeds. When a pantheistic doctrine has ceased to be a monopoly of the intellectual *élite*, and has become common and public property as the creed of a race, it has not, I believe, been accompanied by a specially strong hold on the importance of moral values or the binding obligation of moral law.

The conclusion, accordingly, is that a monism such as Spinoza's, or any similar doctrine, does not provide the view of reality of which we are in search—a view in which the moral order as well as the natural order will be recognised as valid. And the reason for the failure of the doctrine may be traced back to its denial of any real purpose in the universe. We may therefore look back and ask whether, after all, it may not be possible to interpret the world as purposive and yet to understand

it as one, after the manner of the monist. At first sight, at any rate, it does not appear impossible. For it has to be admitted that purpose does enter into the world in the actions of human beings. Why should we limit its operation to them? This is not a question of the evidence for its presence elsewhere, but only of the logical conceivability of that presence. Seeing that the One Absolute Reality manifests itself as a time-process, why should we say that purpose may appear in one part of the time-process, namely, human activity, but not in any other part of it? There seems no good reason. And if the notion may be extended to any portion of the time-process, may it not also be applied to the time-process as a whole?

How time or change can enter at all into the manifestation of the Absolute Reality is, of course, an unsolved problem; and as such may be allowed to pass without further remark. But it is a fact that the "appearance of the whole universe" (to use Spinoza's phrase) as known to us, is in process of change; and there does not seem to be any graver logical difficulty in conceiving it under the conception of purpose than in conceiving it (as we must) under the conception of change. The fundamental notion in Spinoza's philosophy—that of Substance—may be inconsistent with purpose in the sum-total of the modes of Substance, but it is also hard to reconcile with change within this sum-total, or with purpose anywhere in it—both of which he is obliged to admit. And, if we discard Substance as the fundamental notion, and substitute for it the notion of activity or that of subject, the idea of purpose may appear more in harmony with the general world-view.

Let us suppose then that the idea of purpose is relevant to the total manifestation of the world. This will obviate the difficulty caused by the lack of harmony between the existing phenomena of the world and the moral order, seeing that the purpose and ultimate issue of these phenomena may be the confirmation of that moral order and its manifestation in the world. The question then remains, is this idea of purpose consistent with the world-view which we are examining? What do we mean by purpose? In our experience it always involves two things: first, that an idea of the end precedes the activity or attainment, and secondly, that the activity is determined by the idea. Can these characteristics be valid for the relation of the time-process as a whole to its ground or to the Absolute? It is clear that the first cannot. We cannot conceive the time-process as a whole proceeding from an idea—or from anything—that is antecedent to it in time: for that would be to bring its antecedent ground also within the time-process. But this temporal antecedence of idea to end or manifestation is not the most important characteristic of purpose; it is a feature of purpose only in so far as both idea and activity are distinguishable factors within the time-process. The characteristic which is essential, and without which purpose would lose its meaning altogether, is that the idea is the determining condition of the activity or manifestation. To look upon the world as purposive we must therefore postulate an idea of its final issue in the ultimate ground of the world. That is to say, we attribute to the Absolute an idea; and this idea is of the world as in harmony with the moral order, or as manifesting and realising goodness. Hence the dilemma: If we do not interpret the world as purposive, our view of

it cannot find room for both the natural order and the moral order. If we do interpret it as purposive, we must attribute an idea and a purpose of good to the ground of the world, that is, our theory may still assert the unity of reality; but it recognises mind as fundamental and as working towards an end; its unity is the unity of the good, and the theory will be an ethical theism.

With regard to the second idea mentioned as belonging to our conception of the moral order—the idea of freedom—the monistic view of the world does not admit of any doubt. The unity of the world leaves no room for individual freedom. For my view—as I think it does for any view—the question arose, How comes it that the world as manifested, especially in persons and their relations, shows so defective a correspondence between its existing order and what we have recognised as the moral order? How is it that there is so large a mixture of evil with the good in the world? or indeed that there is any evil at all? My answer was that goodness is something that can be realised by free beings only: that freedom is a condition of the production of good, and that it involves a possible choice of evil: while, on the other hand, the order of the world must be such as to provide a medium not for the activities of perfect beings, but for the training of persons towards the free choice and thus the realisation of goodness. The world must be purposive in order to fashion and confirm the value of human souls; men must be free in order to attain the highest values. When freedom is shut off from the outset as an impossibility, what is the effect upon our view of morality?

How are we to characterise the unfree world? The

question is not really difficult; and yet there is a strange reluctance to face the answer—or perhaps the reluctance is not strange. At any rate almost as much ingenuity has been spent in arguing that the absence of freedom makes no difference, as in proving that freedom cannot possibly be present. Thus we find it argued that, although a man's actions are pre-determined, it is his own character that determines them, and that he can change or modify his character. The point is overlooked that it is only by his actions that he can modify his character, and that if these actions are all part of a rigidly determined sequence, the modification of character is as much determined for him as any particular action. The simple truth is that, on the determinist view, both character and action in all cases proceed from two cooperating causes and from no others. These two are heredity and environment. Heredity provides the characteristic disposition of the finite person as it is when his individual life first begins; everything else results from the way in which the forces of the environment play upon this plastic material. The whole contents of mind and will are the result of the primitive reactions of the individual organism or of the individual mind to external stimuli. Given its initial constitution and given all the circumstances in which it is placed, then the future history of every individual mind could be read like a finished book. Everything is pre-determined from the beginning of the time-process, if it had a beginning, or from eternity, if it had none: a man's choice between good and evil, as much as the fall of a stone or the orbit of a planet. The point is too obvious to need further argument; it might have been too obvious for statement, were it not for a prevailing unwillingness to admit it—an

unwillingness, however, which was not shown by a fearless thinker like Spinoza. The question remains, what bearing the denial of freedom has upon the validity of the moral order and its relation to the causal order of phenomena.

In the first place, we must give up the idea that value is in any way connected with personal freedom in its pursuit or attainment. The man who drifts before each gust of passion or breeze of desire is neither less nor more determined than the strong-willed man who bends circumstances to his purpose. The environment acting upon different kinds of material produces divergent results in the two cases by the same process of unerring causal connexions. It is false to say that the one man might have been strong or that the other might have shown himself weak. Neither of them could have been different from what he was; and the values which their lives showed or failed to show were due to conditions over which there was no personal control. Goodness, and value generally, must be unconnected with the free effort or the free choice of the selves in whom it may be realised.

The second point follows from the first. As value does not depend upon personal freedom, the discrepancy between the natural order and the moral order cannot be explained or justified by appealing to the need for a medium which will evoke, test, and confirm the free efforts of individuals and societies to realise value. Had the order of the world been such as to make it easy instead of difficult to restrain selfish and sensual desire and to cherish only the things that are more excellent, the only value that would have been lost is freedom (and that we are assuming not to be a value any more than a reality),

and many values would have been gained. A universe without pain or evil, in which there is no discord between desire and satisfaction, or between one man and his neighbour, is easy enough to imagine. Spencer has provided us with a picture of an ultimate social state in which everything and every one will be perfectly adapted to everything else, and there will be neither pain nor evil. The spirit of adventure rebels against his complacent ideal of a future in which automatism has supplanted life, as much as it does against the soda-water paradise of Chautauqua satirised by William James[1]. But that is because we set store upon the sense of freedom and the values which freedom alone can bring. And, at any rate, the picture does not represent the world as we know it. Here almost all degrees of value and lack of value are to be found; the interest lies in the struggle for the increase of values; and the struggle is supported by the hope of victory for the best.

The monistic world-view does not deny the existence of the conflict. That would be impossible. But it throws over it an air of futility, of unreality. For the combatants are but modes of the one real being, blindly imagining themselves to be free, and he that strikes and he that feels the blow are equally modes of the one substance that knows neither discord nor change. For these modes themselves there is no reason to expect that the illusory turmoil in which their lives are spent will lead to a better order of things, or to think that now or in the future the world is or will be more in harmony with the moral order than it was at any previous epoch. Freedom and purpose disappear together; and we must either falsify

[1] *Talks to Teachers and to Students* (1899), p. 269.

experience by saying that the existing world is perfect, or confess that the so-called moral order has not a valid place in reality.

It is this sense of the inadequacy of the world to the values on which the human mind sets greatest store that has given strength to the mystical tendency found in all the higher representatives of that spiritual form of monism which we call pantheism. And this tendency is best illustrated by Spinoza himself. Discarding the imaginative picture of things which suffices for common sense, looking beyond even the rational or scientific view of phenomena in their causal connexions, he seeks intellectual satisfaction in his vision of the substance of all things, a substance which is One and is by him called God. Whatever happens, he will endeavour to understand it as proceeding from one of the infinite attributes of God, and thus understanding it his mind will be filled with an intellectual satisfaction or intellectual love; and as this love is part of the love wherewith God loves himself, he will both be, and feel himself to be, one with the infinite whole. Anything whatever—whether we call it good or evil in our experience—can be made contributory to this mystic union. We have only to understand it as proceeding from God, and the understanding moves us to joy and love.

This attitude, be it noted, is not a moral but a religious attitude. Pantheism has always been much stronger as a religious than as a moral theory. In it everything leads to God, as everything comes from God; the distinctions of our rational consciousness are all submerged in the One Being. Other religions have to proceed by selection. Not all things are equally on the way to the divine life.

And in the ethical religions, the problem is acute: for the selection has to be made within the region of human experience: good has to be sifted out from evil, and to be recognised as the line of approach to the knowledge of God and to union with God. The difficulty in them is to vindicate all reality for God—a difficulty which, obviously, cannot arise for the other view.

Reverence for the moral order may possibly lead the pantheist into the mystic way; but morality itself is lost on the road. For all things point to the One: all lofty things terminate there; and there is no path so foul but that, if we understand its essence, it will lead to the same goal. And, when the goal is reached, we are absorbed in a Being beyond good and evil; and, knowing that all things are in essence one, we may well be indifferent to the claims of one event rather than another in the illusion which we call the world.

# XVI

## PURPOSE

Monistic theories have, as has been already seen, great difficulties to meet in dealing with the facts described by the terms purpose and freedom. It is hard for them to interpret the world as through and through purposive without at the same time giving a theistic colour to their world-view, and yet it is impossible to deny that purpose is manifested at least by human beings, and is thus a factor in the course of the world as a whole. Freedom is dealt with more ruthlessly. It implies a certain spontaneity and independence on the part of finite minds, and it is therefore dismissed as illusory. With the theistic view, on the other hand, both conceptions are closely connected; for the theistic argument already suggested they are essential postulates; and it is desirable, before proceeding further, to elucidate the meaning and justify the use of both. The two conceptions are intimately related to one another; but we must begin by considering them apart, and purpose will be taken first.

Purpose is contrasted with mechanism. And yet every machine is purposive. A machine, however, is something constructed by intelligent art; its purpose lies outside it and is seen in the work which it performs. What it does is a result simply of the structure and relation of its parts and the motor power with which it is supplied; and it is called purposive because it has been put together with a

view to this performance. The purpose is outside the mechanism. When we speak of certain processes in nature, or of nature as a whole, as mechanical, we are looking upon the processes as due to these same factors, namely, the structure and relation of the parts of the system and the energy belonging to it; but in this case we postulate nothing regarding an intelligence, either outside or inside the system, which determines its mode of operation. Given an isolated system of this sort, a knowledge of its constituent factors at any moment, if it were complete enough, would enable the expert mathematician to trace its past history and anticipate each stage of its future condition. If the system is not isolated but played upon by external forces, then knowledge of these forces in addition would enable him to predict the result. A purposive system cannot be described completely in the same terms; in this case something else has to be taken into account—the end towards which it strives, whether this end be present to that system as a conscious design, as in the case of human and deliberate purposes, or whether we have to gather it from observation of the actual working of the living organism.

The mechanical explanation is attractive both by its simplicity and by its power of describing and anticipating events; and, accordingly, attempts have often been made to extend its application to the vital systems commonly regarded as purposive, and to show that they also, if thoroughly analysed, could be reduced to terms of mechanism. By treating consciousness as an epiphenomenon, the same mode of explanation is applied to the whole realm of existing things. As a result we reach a view of reality which is throughout open to mathematical calculation and from which purpose is entirely excluded.

From the point of view of scientific and practical manipulation the great advantages of such a scheme are obvious. It gives a point of view from which the whole may be regarded, and it puts into our hands an instrument by which, if the system of things at any time is known to us, we can tell what it has been or will be at any other time, and can do so without reference to anything outside this system of interacting forces. These advantages, however, are gained only at a price. Strictly taken, the mechanical system is a purely abstract system, and it deals with entities such as mass-points which are not known to exist, but are concepts formed in the interests of its descriptive scheme. The scheme fits the existing universe so far, but only so far. It provides an abstract formula to which actual movements within the world are found to conform within limits; it expresses quantitative aspects only, and ignores the qualitative differences of things. Now in the actual world, as experienced, different things react differently to the same impressed force; and these different reactions become known to us only by means of observation and experiment. On this account the method of the experimental sciences is fundamentally distinguished from that of mechanics. It is the familiar distinction of inductive from deductive reasoning. Both methods are in constant use. Mechanical principles apply to the whole of nature, though they fail to describe all the phenomena which interest us; and mathematical expression remains the ideal to which an approximation is made by every success of scientific analysis in referring a qualitative difference to combinations of elements which are qualitatively alike.

In this way it comes about that the term mechanical or mechanistic is often used to denominate something much less abstract than the mechanical scheme strictly so called. It is applied not merely to the description of the movements of mass-points (or other hypothetical entities of mechanics) but also to the description of the behaviour of the actual bodies or substances immediately known to the observer. The mechanical or mechanistic theory of life, for instance, does not profess to give an account of vital processes in terms of pure mechanism. It is a physico-chemical and not a purely mechanical theory, for it does not attempt to demonstrate that all qualitative differences are resolvable into quantitative. It is important to notice this change of meaning in the term mechanical, as it brings out the limits to the power of calculation which are introduced by the admission of quality. If two forces meet at a point and their magnitude and direction are known, the magnitude and direction of the resultant force can be calculated exactly. But his knowledge of the separate gases does not at present enable a chemist to predict that the synthesis of $H_2$ with O will produce a substance which acts as water acts. For this power of prediction he depends upon former experience, coupled with the postulate of the uniformity of nature. At the same time experimental tests bring out certain quantitative relations between the elements and the compound, and they tend to confirm the law of the conservation of energy. Thus mechanical principles are not set aside by the result of the experiment; but they do not account for it or even describe it completely.

Mechanism, strictly taken, is not concerned with

causation as assumed in the experimental sciences. It is a deductive system, and when it enables us to predict consequences it does so independently of similar experience in the past. On the other hand, when dealing with the more complex phenomena of nature, our predictive power depends upon previous experience of like causes and their effects. Hume was quite right when he said that "if we reason *a priori*, anything may appear able to produce anything. The falling of a pebble may, for aught we know, extinguish the sun, or the wish of a man control the planets in their orbits[1]." It is by means of experience that we learn the tendency of one natural event to be followed by another event of a definite kind.

The advantage of the mechanical theory lies in the power which it gives to calculate and predict; but this power is limited to the quantitative aspects of phenomena. The predictive power possessed by the natural sciences is not limited in this way, for the experience on which they rely gives knowledge of qualities and their changes; and their ability to anticipate results depends, in the first place, on the postulate of the uniformity of nature, and, secondly, on the actual degree of similarity which has been found to exist between successive events in past experience. The so-called mechanical theory of life is mechanical only in its quantitative aspects; as regards the qualitative aspects of vital phenomena, it is empirical. It is only in a wider and somewhat loose sense that the theory is called mechanical or (perhaps better) mechanistic.

Difficulties.

a) Even in this wider sense of the term, the mechanistic theory encounters a new difficulty when applied to the

[1] *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, sect. xii, part 3, ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 164; *Essays*, ed. Green and Grose, vol. II, p. 135.

facts of life. It is not that any fundamental principles of mechanism, or the axiom of the conservation of energy, cease to be valid. There is no sufficient evidence for the destruction or creation of energy in an organic system any more than in an inorganic system. Nor is the difference due to our inability to predict, except on empirical grounds, the nature of the effect which a given combination of factors will produce. It is true that the nature of life could not be predicted by a chemist from his knowledge of the elements combined in protoplasm, but he is still unable to predict the properties of water from a knowledge of the properties of hydrogen and of oxygen. The new difficulty lies in the peculiarity of the behaviour of the living organism. Both the cell and the living body which consists of many cells build up, maintain, and reproduce a certain system, and do so by assimilating material from their environment and by rejecting waste products. The living system persists throughout the gradual change of any or all of the material particles which constitute it, and the characteristic activities by which it achieves this result can be understood only if we look upon them as directed to this end. The biologist—however mechanistic his theory may be—can never dispense with this reference to an end in his descriptions. He constantly employs a concept which is irrelevant in physical and chemical descriptions. The distinctive character of vital phenomena is brought out by the familiar truth that, in spite of age-long efforts in the laboratory, life proceeds only from life. A living body or a living cell may be deprived of this peculiar property we call life; but the life once gone cannot be restored out of the constituents.

As before, therefore, mechanism in the strict sense is concerned only with the quantities and transformations of matter and of energy in the organic system. It is verified by observations which go to show that the organism cannot expend energy which it does not possess. It says nothing as to the mode in which the organic activities will be exercised. In the wider meaning of mechanism, which includes physico-chemical concepts, further prediction is possible regarding the material constituents of the organism and their behaviour. The new fact, which distinguishes life and which physico-chemical concepts do not describe, is the direction of this behaviour towards the maintenance and development of the vital system. Vital activities are intelligible when viewed under this concept; they are not intelligible without it. Vital activities may indeed be predicted by the observer, as chemical reactions may be predicted; but in predicting them one has to regard more than antecedent phenomena; the point of view is not that of efficient causation only. One has to take account of the vital system which they subserve and which they have to establish and maintain. They are understood only by means of the concept of end or purpose.

When we pass from the merely biological level to that of the actions of conscious and intelligent beings, a further fact meets us—not merely the end achieved, but the idea of the end as it is present in consciousness. The end is not merely a result towards which the various reactions of the organism concentrate; it is the fulfilment of a purpose already present in the consciousness of the subject. Here the sequence of events is one step further removed from capability of being adequately described

in terms either of mechanism proper or of physical causation. Mechanism applies as before; it can equate the energy in the consequent with the energy in the antecedent; but it goes no further in enabling us to predict the mode or direction of the conscious organism's behaviour. In conscious as in other vital activities we must look to the end in order to understand them; and in the organisms which are conscious, unlike other organisms, the activity may be that of realising an idea or purpose which as a mental fact preceded and anticipated the result. Now, this result cannot be predicted by the observer either by application of physico-chemical generalisations, or on the ground of a tendency to establish and maintain the biological system. So far as prediction is possible, it depends upon knowledge of the individual's mental or subjective system—of his disposition, ruling ideas, and dominant desires—a system which cannot be disclosed by the instruments of the natural sciences.

There is no need to enter here upon the efforts to minimise the importance of this ideal system by treating it either as an epiphenomenon—a mere otiose accompaniment of neural changes—or as a series which runs parallel with material changes. These speculative hypotheses, even if better established, would not alter the fact that in this region the ability to describe and to predict fails the mechanical theory almost completely—whether we take the mechanical theory in its stricter or in its wider meaning. And it was only in virtue of its ability to describe and to predict that the mechanical theory claimed acceptance. As a theory of reality, therefore—as a point of view for understanding the world—it proves itself inadequate; and it loses nothing of its real value

by being confined to the quantitative aspects of physical change, which are its own domain and mark its proper limits.

II

The term purpose has been used in describing the actions of a system when they cannot be understood through their antecedents alone, and without reference to the end which they tend to bring about. Activity of this kind is exhibited by all living beings: the normal vital processes tend to the maintenance and perpetuation of the organism and cannot be understood without regard to this end. The end in all cases seems to be the object to the attainment of which the activity is directed; but the mode of operation varies conspicuously according as it is or is not accompanied by a consciousness of the direction or of the end. The vital processes of the plant and the deliberate plans of man are alike purposive; but in the former we have no evidence of the presence of an idea guiding the series of movements which takes place, whereas in our own experience we have an immediate consciousness of such an idea. These are therefore different types of process, both of them purposive. It is possible to regard each of them as valid for a different region of facts. It is also possible, however, to regard one of them as more fundamental than the other, so that the latter may be reducible to or in some way accounted for by means of the former; and in this case the question which of the two is fundamental will become the question whether we are to explain the movement of things by consciousness or by the unconscious.

The two views have certain points in common. In both cases the mode of explanation is opposed to the

mechanical. In the mechanical theory, and in the view of efficient causation also, the present and future are explained solely by the past. In so far as action is purposive, it cannot be explained without reference to the future; there may be no idea of what is about to be in the subject whose activity is under investigation, but there must be such an idea present in the mind of the investigator; his explanation involves it; it is through the future as well as the past that he understands the present. The wider the system of things which he conceives under the idea of purpose, the more does he tend to bring the temporal process into a unity in which past, present, and future are interrelated. On the other hand, in mechanism and efficient causation, the explanation of each stage is sought simply in its antecedent; and this antecedent depends in the same way on a previous stage, and so on indefinitely. The mode of explanation is thus committed to an indefinite regress, unless it can establish a circular process; and the mechanical law of the degradation of energy forbids this, for it shows the impossibility of the recurrence of the same condition, apart from interference from without the system. On the other hand, the attainment of purpose gives a certain unity to the whole series of movements in time which cooperate towards that attainment: the end is the realisation of something somehow present from the beginning.

Further, it appears that this unity of the whole process is, in every organism, due to an internal source—to the purpose, as we call it, which conceives the end or at least directs action towards its attainment. And this brings out another point in which unconscious and conscious purpose agree and which distinguishes them from mechanical and

inorganic movements. The re-action of inorganic material to an external force varies according to its physical and chemical constitution; but in the case of an organism there is something more than this. The impressed force is a stimulus or occasion for the release of an internal impulse towards maintaining the system or (as it may be with conscious beings) the ideal of its life. The impulse has an inner origin, and, although surrounded by external forces, it does not itself admit of spatial determination.

Vital activity, however conceived, thus differs from inorganic movements. But behind the similarities which distinguish all its forms, there lies the profound difference marked by the presence or absence of consciousness of the end. Of conscious purpose we have immediate experience; unconscious purpose is a concept inferred from the mode of operation of other organisms which display evidence of working towards an end, but do not display any evidence of possessing an idea of that end. It is therefore difficult to form a clear concept of the nature of the latter process. It is defined negatively—by the absence of the idea which is always present in purpose as experienced. And it is conceived as an intermediate stage between two better known extremes. We can understand mechanism owing to the simplicity of the ideas involved; we have immediate acquaintance with conscious purpose. Between the two lies something hypothetical or at best obscure: the purposive process which defies explanation as a form of physical causation, but lacks a factor essential to purpose as directly known.

Nevertheless, unconscious purpose has been taken as fundamental in the explanation of the process in the world, intelligence being given a subordinate and dependent rôle.

This view is one aspect of the anti-intellectualist movement in philosophy that began with Schopenhauer and finds its most distinguished present exponent in M. Bergson. According to Schopenhauer, will is the thing-in-itself, the reality which underlies efficient causation[1] and for which the accompaniment of intelligence is unessential[2]. Similarly, M. Bergson holds to the fundamental reality of a vital impetus, which operates independently of any ideal factor. The fact is differently named; but what is in view seems in both cases to be essentially the same as what I have called purpose, when that term is not taken as implying consciousness. And the term may be retained. It is also held by Schopenhauer and by Bergson that will or vital impulse is known intuitively and in a different way from ordinary objects. Whatever is object, says Schopenhauer, is thereby appearance not thing-in-itself; and similarly M. Bergson thinks that our understanding, owing to the concepts with which it works, perverts the true nature of reality, which intuition alone can grasp. Difficulties are thus thrown in the way of getting a clear view of this reality, for even our fundamental intuitions can only be expressed in terms which are intellectual; and indeed conceptual descriptions are not avoided by the writers who hold them to be misleading.

In almost every region of life we can observe processes which fulfil a purpose without there being any evidence of the presence of an idea of the purpose fulfilled. The growth of the plant, the working of animal instinct, the normal vital processes of the human organism, imply no volition, no idea even, of the end, as when the

[1] *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, § 23.
[2] *Ibid.*, § 19.

heart beats or food is digested; the more normal the process is, the less is its operation accompanied by any consciousness of it; an idea of its end or purpose is only superadded by reflexion. Further, in the world of mind and society we find results achieved, institutions established, modes of conduct and even of belief built up, without any of the minds to whom they may be traced having had any clear idea of the end to which their efforts were tending. Thus there would seem to be no lack of facts which may be pointed to in support of the view that unconscious purpose is the power—or a power—which is driving on the world to an end which none can foresee. But a question remains concerning the interpretation of these facts. What is meant by speaking of the process as a purpose although unconscious? It is not easy to answer the question; it is not often put; and different possible answers to it are often confused.

In the first place, the process may be regarded as mere aimless striving—movements internally determined but pointing nowhere in particular. It would be absurd to call this purpose, but it might be included under the more elastic term 'will' as used by Schopenhauer, or the still more general term *élan vital*. Or, in the second place, the striving, though without a definite aim, may be a tendency away from something that is definite—namely, the existing condition felt as defective or unpleasant—and may issue in random movements to escape the disagreeable present. In both these kinds of process we cannot trace any intrinsic tendency to a fuller or better or any other definite state of being. They are of the nature of impulse, but we seek in vain in them for any characteristic which would justify our description of them as

purposive. If, nevertheless, we find that such processes do achieve a serviceable end oftener than can be accounted for by chance, we must ascribe the direction of the movements to the influence of external forces, and if we do not attribute purpose to these external forces, then the general character of the conception will be mechanistic.

A view of this sort derives support from the Darwinian doctrine. For the operation of natural selection will cut off those organisms which react to the environment in a way which does not suit the conditions, and will leave to flourish and propagate only those which chance to be so constituted as to react in a serviceable manner. What the exact limits of natural selection are is a question for biological enquiry. But it has always one condition; it postulates an organic tendency to maintain and perpetuate life. Acting upon this tendency, the primitive impulses may be turned in various different directions and lead to modified structure; but natural selection only begins to operate when life with its characteristic selective activities is already present.

If we admit these we have to adopt a corresponding view even of primitive impulse: it is selective; it tends in one direction rather than another; it seeks an end even although, neither in the organism nor outside it, is there any idea of that end. This may be taken as the view of unconscious purpose, or immanent will, as the determining force of the world's progress, which has now in many quarters almost attained the rank of a popular creed. But it is hard to understand. There must be some ground or reason determining the life-impulse to take one direction rather than another. It cannot be indifferent to its route, for then its course would have to be determined

externally, and we should be back in the mechanical synopsis. What can the internal ground be? To call it self-preservation with the Stoics and Hobbes and Spinoza is not an explanation; and is besides inadequate, for it fails to account for growth and development. Life never stands still; the life-force seeks an expression which cannot be described by the *status quo*. Function, in other words, does not depend simply upon the structure of the organism; the structure is the mechanism which the life-force has made for itself in interaction with its environment, and which becomes the instrument of its activity and at the same time imposes limits upon it.

How are we to describe that force, impulse, or will which fills the world with its myriad forms? Can we identify its unconscious purpose with the direction that it has taken? To do so would be to ignore the influence of the environment which, operating through the process of natural selection, digs the channels along which the river of life must flow and blocks its course in other directions. The line of historical development cannot be identified with the innate direction of the life-force. It is always a resultant of two things—life and environment—and only in their synthesis can an explanation of the result be found. Yet, according to the view of the process now under consideration, the unconscious will has some direction—a determination towards life of one kind rather than another. Whatever this direction may be, we do not get a sufficient indication of it in the organisms which are unconscious of it and do not show it in their structure. We may suppose that the tendency is towards consciousness or idea. This is the supposition that has been made by most exponents of the 'immanent will.' But how are

we to understand an unconscious determination towards consciousness? It must be internal, something belonging not to structure but to life. There must therefore be some feature in the nature of life itself which gives it this trend to consciousness. If we could interpret this feature by the old doctrine of evolution—the unfolding of a nature already present—then we should be able and obliged to say that consciousness was already present in the primitive organism, but only in a minor degree: every monad, as Leibniz imagined, would have perceptive activity, which gradually develops into the clear light of self-consciousness. But if our view of evolution requires us to acknowledge a discriminating influence on the part of the environment and a capacity in the organism to learn by experience through contact with the environment, we may yet be unable to distinguish the share of each factor in the process, and thus we may have no means at all for determining the nature of that trend to fuller life which we describe as the immanent purpose of the living being. In this latter case, and in view of the myriad lines of development which diverge from the primal path of life, we shall probably be induced to appeal to the environment for the explanation of the preference of one line to another—of that which issues in consciousness to that which terminates in vegetation. And in so doing we shall fall back on an external and quasi-mechanical explanation of purpose itself.

The purpose of which alone we have immediate experience arises in our own minds and is carried out by our own actions. Evolutionary science is able to trace, at any rate in broad outline, the successive steps by which

action of this sort has emerged from the midst of vital processes in which there is no clear evidence for the presence of consciousness, and these again from processes which are, in the wider sense of the term, mechanistic (that is, physico-chemical). It cannot assert that the factors operative in the later stage were present in the earlier, and it is not able to show that they are due to some complexity in the organisation of the more primitive factors, brought about in the course of time. However firmly the causal connectedness of successive stages may be maintained by those who trace the historical process, it has to be admitted that no plausible account has yet been given of the causal transition from physico-chemism to life, or from merely vital process to consciousness. Two interpretations of the facts remain possible: that which holds that the transition will yet be made clear and will be seen to be due simply to the growing complexity of physical and chemical processes from which first life and afterwards consciousness arise; and, on the other hand, the view that the earlier stages of cosmic development have not been fully stated by the physicist and chemist, and that, hidden from their analysis, life and mind have somehow been present from the first. Between these two views the theory of an unconscious purpose or immanent will attempts to mediate, and like many mediating theories it is beset by the difficulties of both the views between which it occupies an uncertain position. Like the mechanical theory it has to face the most awkward of all problems, the transition from the unconscious to consciousness; and it shares with the opposed view the assumption of an internal factor of whose operation there is no direct evidence in the early periods of cosmic history.

If we are content with a knowledge of parts or factors only, then we may be satisfied with the distinction of material processes, of life, and of mind. In the first there is no trace of the second or third, and in plant life there is no evidence of mind, while on the other hand, life is not due to chemical synthesis nor consciousness to the development of merely vital processes. But, if we seek a point of view from which we may interpret the world as a whole, these different forms of cosmic movement cannot be left in isolation. We have seen the inadequacy of the physico-chemical and merely vitalistic conceptions to describe one part of the world, namely, man's part in it. Is it possible that the conception of purpose—no longer described as unconscious—may have a wider application than to his activity and be descriptive of the process of the whole?

Conscious purpose is known to us directly only as it exists in the mind of man; and it is found there in varying degrees and always in company with tendencies which we hesitate to describe by the same term. It is at its clearest when the idea of a future good is connected with a definite plan for its attainment and then realised in action; but it is also present in the vaguer regions of endeavour, when we seek something less clearly defined or feel ourselves drawn to a course of action whose value we recognise but dimly, looking to future experience to reveal more fully both the way to the end and the mode in which our nature will find satisfaction in it. These vaguer impulses are not separated from conscious life, though consciousness hardly penetrates to their further issues, but they may function without a clear idea of the end they subserve, almost in the way in which the instincts work which protect and preserve our organic life.

The close connexion of ideal or purposeful action with merely impulsive action has been regarded as supporting the view that the former is an effect of the latter. It is supposed that certain impulses lead to a result which is felt as favourable, that the idea of pleasure or of success is in consequence associated with them, and that, after repeated associations, the idea of the pleasurable or favourable result revives that train of conative tendencies which had been found in the past to lead to a successful issue. In this associative sequence, the intelligent process, which forms an idea of the end, is united to the conative process in a purely external way; and this is one way in which the facts have been explained. But, even within the limits of the individual mind, there is another way in which impulse and idea are connected. The search for objects, conceived and prompted by ideas, leads to increased facility in the movement of the conative processes until habit takes the place of deliberate planning. Habitual activity recalls and expresses the stored-up results of previous deliberate and purposeful actions. In itself, regarded as an isolated process at any time, it is a merely impulsive action leading to an end without prior consciousness of that end. But, if we take a longer view, we see it as the result of previous conscious actions in which the end was deliberately pursued. The significance of this process is that in it we find not the evolution of conscious purpose from mere impulse or from the unconscious, but a development in the opposite direction by which conscious purposes pass into habit and impulse and use these as a mechanism which relieves the mind from attention to many of the detailed needs of life and sets its independent activities free for further ends.

Basic order of the world is purposive

In the region of instinct, we find a highly complex organisation of impulses, related to different stimuli, and adapted to the needs of individual and racial life. By a mode of explanation similar to the above, it is possible to regard the instincts also as examples of organic memory, in which are accumulated the results of countless experiments in living on the part of the far-away ancestors of the present generation. Many varying degrees of intelligence may have prompted these experiments, but perhaps all of them may be regarded as selective processes, strivings towards an object of desire or for the satisfaction of a felt want. They leave their record in the racial structure, as individual functioning is recorded in the habits of the individual; and the double record has its part to play in the conative activity of the individual—as instinct and as habit.

The tentative efforts of organic and conscious life are, however, in all cases, limited and modified by the influence of the environment which impedes action in one direction and favours it in another. The purposive activity exhibited by the organism is thus part of a larger process which includes all individual lives within it. Further, in the lower reaches of organic life, it is often difficult to determine exactly the limits of the individual organism and to distinguish it from a society of organisms. Merely vital individuality is not so well-marked as conscious individuality, and the centre or source of purposive process in it is sometimes uncertain. Even the line which separates the organic purpose from the inorganic, which we have been looking for in the individual centre, becomes obscure.

One interpretation of these facts is that they show the gradual disappearance of purpose as we descend in

the scale of being; and it is certainly true that purpose becomes more difficult to localise. And there are other facts which make us hesitate to take the finite centre of individual life as the only source of purpose. In man, where it is clearest and most conscious, there are also, as we have seen, many traces of an underlying purpose in his activity which, being due to the behaviour of past individuals, indicate a racial rather than an individual purpose. And, in the interaction of life with its environment, we cannot overlook the mass of facts which point in the direction of adaptation. These have, it is true, been overworked by so many generations of enquirers in the search for marks of design that we are now apt to pass them all by with a reference to natural selection. At one point, however, the operation of natural selection must stop short, and that is the point before which life begins. Natural selection could not favour the transition from the inorganic to the organic, for it always presupposes vital processes in order that it may work at all. If purpose be admitted as necessary for the interpretation of organisms, and if organisms are held to have arisen out of inorganic material, then there is good reason to postulate that the process which led to organic and purposive life was itself animated by purpose. And the *via media* of unconscious purpose becomes more difficult than ever to accept when it is applied to inorganic arrangements and movements. The purpose which we are driven to postulate in this case cannot be individual, and it cannot be merely racial; it must be universal. There is not any longer an excuse for interpreting it after the fashion of impulse, for impulse belongs only to living beings with an individual spontaneity. We can conceive the universal purpose

as acting only in the manner of mind or consciousness. On this view, the world as a whole will be regarded as animated by a universal conscious purpose, which is expressed not only in its arrangement and laws but also in the finite purposes, conscious and unconscious, displayed by individual living beings. This view, however, is not put forward as a doctrine which can be rigidly demonstrated. It is part of that more comprehensive synopsis according to which we have been trying to understand the world as instrumental towards the realisation of values.

It is not altogether a smooth and easy way that leads to the conclusion; and the facts of dysteleology must be regarded as the chief stumbling-block on the road. These too may be said to show purpose; but they also prove that the purposes included within the universe are neither entirely good nor entirely harmonious. Purpose is not an adequate conception for the unification of experience until we know its end. It depends for its nature as well as for its value on the interests which it subserves; and these interests may vary and conflict in different purposive centres. In the will of man and its interests we have the clearest indications of this variation and conflict. From his consciousness also we derive the conviction that the conflict can be reconciled only by the unity of different interests in the harmony of the good; and that this harmony can be established only gradually and by free activity. Freedom will explain the divergence and conflict of purposes, and also their slowly progressive moralisation; and to establish this harmony of goodness through the freedom of man, an environment of ideal perfection would have been unsuitable. This point has been already

argued. That even it accounts for the details of evil in the world I do not pretend. Our knowledge of the details and their issue is not adequate enough to establish such a conclusion. Besides, there may be other purposes in the world than that which concerns ourselves and lies open to our own reflexion. Whether those purposes imply or require something analogous to our freedom in other portions of the universe than finite conscious lives is a matter of speculation on which I do not enter.

Purpose is in direct opposition to a mechanistic or naturalistic interpretation of the universe.

# XVII

## FREEDOM

The view set forth in this work implies that the world as it appears in space and time is a purposive system; and of that postulate a defence has been offered. But finite minds have each their own purposes; and the argument requires further that, in forming and carrying out these purposes, they have a certain spontaneity or freedom; and to this postulate consideration must now be given.

The question of freedom is part of the question as to the way in which we are to interpret the unity of reality. To affirm freedom for finite persons is to limit the psychical unity of the universe and to give a meaning to its causal connectedness which is perhaps not the most obvious meaning. Consequently, the assertion has been always met with severe and even impatient criticism both from monistic philosophers, whether they are inclined to materialism or to idealism, and from numbers of men of science who are anxious to do something in defence of the law of universal causation.

We have already seen how the idea of freedom is dealt with in the monistic scheme. It is ruled out of court at once as an interference with the unity of the whole. The same scheme, as we have found, either explains moral values as mere *entia rationis* or else is led into a mystical attitude for which acquiescence in the actual, whether called good or evil, becomes the highest

good. One or other of these conclusions we should be obliged to adopt if the scheme itself were well-grounded. It is unnecessary to repeat the criticism of its grounds. And, if we admit the independent validity of the moral order, and its relation to the natural order, then in that relation we shall find the significance of individual freedom —if individual freedom is truly a factor in the universe.

But to assert personal freedom as a factor in the universal order brings us at once in face of the causal law—a law which claims universal validity. In modern controversy it is the causation-argument that has always been the chief support of determinism. How can man have any freedom in volition if each event follows in a determinate manner from antecedent events? Causal determinateness seems to leave no loop-hole for that possibility of opposites with which human volition is credited. This view has often been regarded as self-evident; but, before we accept it, it is well to be clear as to the meaning of the principle of causation itself.

The first and most general statement of the causal law is that every event is the effect of something else which we call its cause. Nothing is said here as to the nature either of the cause or of the effect; it is merely a heuristic principle which leads us to enquire into the causal connexions of particular sets of phenomena. The principle itself says nothing as to the nature of the things connected. So far as it goes, the falling of a pebble might extinguish the sun or the wish of a man control the planets in their orbits. With this principle, therefore, personal freedom is not inconsistent; for the freedom asserted is that of the self to act as a cause, not of anything to happen without a cause.

A second meaning of the causal principle was formulated by Mill out of Hume's criticism. In it the implication of power or efficiency which was commonly associated with the first view is dropped, and the idea of uniformity takes its place. The law may therefore be stated in the form that the same antecedents are followed by the same consequents: a cause is simply an invariable or constant antecedent. This is still, perhaps, the most common view of cause. But it names something the presence of which in the world cannot be verified. There are no invariable or constant antecedents in nature; the cosmic process never repeats itself. An exact statement of the law, applicable to the actual order, would therefore have to take some modified form, such as this: So far as the antecedents are the same, the consequents will be the same; or, more precisely, any difference between two sets of consequents must be accounted for (or preceded by) a corresponding difference in their respective antecedents. If one sequence is $a$, $b$, and another $\alpha$, $\beta$, then the difference of $\beta$ from $b$ is explained by a difference of $\alpha$ from $a$.

Here we have what seems to be a clear statement, and yet in one respect it is lacking in precision. The consequents in any one sequence are always different from the consequents in any other sequence. Even in the experiments of the laboratory there is only an approximation to complete similarity. So are the antecedents always different. It is therefore only a statement of the constant process of change in the world to say that along with the difference in consequents there is a difference in antecedents. And to describe the difference in the latter as corresponding with that in the former is to use a vague term which stands in need of further definition. It is

possible to give some further definition such as is needed by a description of the qualities exhibited by antecedents and consequents respectively. But this qualitative description is always lacking in exactness. Complete precision can be got only by a quantitative expression, and that is supplied by the law of conservation of energy, which will enable us to give a new statement to the causal law, such as the following: In every sequence, so far as the system under investigation does not receive energy from, or part with it to, an outside system, the quantity of energy in the consequent is the same as the quantity of energy in the antecedent. Thus a third point of view is reached from which the causal law may be formulated, and here it receives a precise form, in which it may be applied in scientific investigations.

When it is argued that the doctrine of freedom is inconsistent with the causal principle, the arguments sometimes proceed on the second and sometimes on the third way of regarding that principle. And it is when the principle is conceived in the latter and exact form that the argument can be brought home most distinctly. Now, volition is manifested frequently, if not always, by bodily movement; and if volition can be interpreted as the free act of a self, then this freely-determined action has an effect on the material world. And it is here that the determinist intervenes with his objection. The objection is shortly as follows: In reflex action it is admitted that the physical stimulus gives rise to a neural process, then to a redistribution of energy in some nerve centre, and thereafter through the efferent nerves to muscular contraction and bodily movement. It is admitted that the whole process from stimulus to movement is on material

lines and that it is carried through in accordance with the principle of conservation of energy. Now substitute voluntary action for reflex action. To the physiologist the only difference between the two cases is that in the latter it is in the nerve cells of a certain portion of the brain, and not in some subordinate centre, that the redistribution of energy from afferent to efferent nerves takes place. There is no disappearance of energy into some psychical entity called the mind or soul, and no appearance of new energy from such a source. The sequence follows the well-defined routes of the bodily organism and is nowhere broken. Therefore, it is concluded, there is no place for free will.

This argument, if it prove anything, proves too much. It has no special reference to freedom. It is not some figment of free will that it disproves, but the whole concept of mental causation or conscious activity. Yet conscious activity is a fact; and we are not passively conscious of what we call our actions as if they were the moving pictures of a cinema show. If this truth were really inconsistent with the doctrine of the conservation of energy as manifested in the organic body, we should have to examine more closely the grounds for our acceptance of that doctrine. But the doctrine of the conservation of energy in a material system does not and cannot refute the fact of conscious activity in the domain of mind. It does imply that the bodily expression of conscious activity is subject to material laws; but that has not been called in question. And, with regard to the conscious activity itself, it can only show that it belongs to a different order of facts from the material.

The valid results of the argument are therefore two:

first, that life or mind, as distinguished from the body which it animates, is not a storehouse of energy, either receiving it or parting with it: that energy is always connected with the material system; and secondly, that the causality which we attribute to mind is not a creation of this energy, while its bodily expressions must take place in a manner consistent with the doctrine that the amount of energy remains a constant. According as we interpret the relation of body and mind, the fact of mental causation will or will not conflict with the doctrine of the conservation of energy. If we look upon mind as a sort of little body within the body, then we shall also look upon its activity as similar to bodily action, and contradiction will be the result. On the other hand, if we hold that mind or mental function is *sui generis*, no contradiction will arise. But, whether there is contradiction or not, it is mental causation in general that is concerned. To the question of free will the argument has no special application.

A living organism reacts to stimulus in a different way from a dead body; a conscious being reacts differently from a being without consciousness. The relation of organised structure to life and to mind is indeed so close that an organism may continue for a time to react in much the same way as before, after consciousness has disappeared. The organism is, as it were, tuned up by consciousness to respond in a certain manner, and a little time elapses before it gets out of tune. But the time is never long before the difference between conscious reaction and the reaction of the dead body becomes apparent. Yet there has been no diminution of physical energy with the disappearance of consciousness. The quantitative law

of the conservation of energy does not explain in any way what is peculiar to conscious activity even in its simplest manifestations. From this, however, it does not follow that conscious action is irregular or outside law in its manifestations. It may even be described by the causal law in that wider unquantitative form in which it means a certain uniformity. We do find in consciousness, as in material processes, that like antecedents have commonly like consequents, that the same kind of motive tends to produce the same kind of response from persons of like temperament and antecedents.

A school of psychologists has maintained more than this. It has taken its cue from the quantitative methods of physical science, and it has striven to submit mental process to quantitative measurement. In the region of volition it is held that the result depends upon the strongest motive; but in what way the strength of the motive is to be measured is a question not easy to answer. Sometimes it is said that the motive which prevails is the strongest; but this only repeats the dogma without solving the difficulty. If it is the strongest motive that prevails, then there must be some common measure of strength by which the force of all motives may be estimated, from sensuous impulse to regard for the moral law. If there are any differences of quality between motives, and these differences cannot be reduced to different degrees of strength of the same quality, something more than strength of motive is required to explain both the triumph and the failure of moral ideals when confronted with the temptations by which they are beset. If motives of whatever sort could be reduced to terms of pleasure-pain, and if pleasures and pains were capable of quantitative sum-

mation, then indeed the difficulty would be solved, and we should have a clear causal account of human action which would exclude the notion of free will. But this is the only supposition ever put forward that would achieve the result. Strict causal determination of volition by motives requires measurement of all motives by their strength; psychological hedonism is the only theory that makes such measurement possible. This form of determinism, therefore—and it is the only form which admits of exact statement—stands or falls with the doctrine of psychological hedonism—a doctrine which we have already seen reason to reject.

The fundamental objection to the 'strongest motive' explanation of volition is that it treats motives as if they had an existence by themselves, and each a measurable strength. The assumption overlooks the fact that the motive exists only for the self-conscious being whose motive it is. Apart from the self it is nothing: there is only the physical stimulus. The treatment of motives as existing forces is on a par with the treatment of presentations, sensations, or feelings as separate existents, out of which mind is somehow compounded. But presentation and motive alike are only elements arrived at by analysing concrete states of mind; if we think that the division into these elements is or can be an exhaustive account of mind, we forget the unity which binds them together and without which none of them would be real.

Accordingly, if we speak of the relation between successive mental states as a causal relation, causation in this case will not mean quantitative equivalence in respect of some form of energy resident in antecedent and in consequent; but it may mean continuity, and it may mean uniformity. Continuity hardly bears upon the point in

dispute. Neither in nature nor in human action are the changes by which moment is linked to moment strictly infinitesimal in amount. The continuity which we are at liberty to assert must allow for the occurrence of changes of considerable and varying amount. It is the law of these changes that we seek, and there is no good reason for identifying the law of succession in mind with the law which holds for nature. It is therefore upon the conception of causation as uniformity that the doctrine of determinism will depend. But strict uniformity of sequence cannot be verified in any case. The same antecedents are never repeated, nor the same consequents. We may say that a difference in the consequent is always connected with some difference in the antecedent; but, as there are always differences both in consequents and in antecedents, this statement conveys little until we know to what difference in the one a given difference in the other is to be referred.

Uniformity in any strict sense is never verified. We cannot take a particular sort of motive and say that it will always produce action of a given kind; the variety of human nature refutes the assumption. We cannot even say that it will always operate upon the same man in the same way; he reveals his individuality not only by confirming our expectations but also by the surprises he gives us. Even statistical results are far from exhibiting any precise uniformity of connexion; and even if they enable us to state a general law for the average man, this does not decide our question, which is concerned not with the average man but with the individual.

Thus it appears that the determinist explanation is driven from one view of causation to another. It is driven

from the law in its exact quantitative statement as used in physical science, because it is discovered that with this view it is no more difficult to reconcile a will that is free than a will that is bound. It takes refuge in the more general statement of uniformity; but for this no adequate verification is discovered. And in consequence there is a tendency for it to be driven back upon the first and simplest meaning of cause as the agent or producing power. Nor is it illegitimate to adopt this meaning in describing mental process, for it was from the experience of personal activity that the notion of cause was originally derived. But here the question remains whether, and if so in what sense, the person who causes the action is himself determined in its causation.

To this question the determinist has an answer ready. The volition or action is in every case due to the present mental state of the person acting, combined with the effect of the environment on that mental state. And as his state of mind is due in part to previous actions of his and in part to his original inheritance of dispositions, all actions may be said to result from the cooperation of the two factors, heredity and environment. As the environment acts upon him through a physical medium, its contribution to the issue would seem to be theoretically calculable; at any rate, its influence cannot be a proof of freedom. And although heredity may be largely an unknown factor, it can hardly be maintained that it is due to the free will of the individual whose character it goes to form. The idea of freedom would therefore seem to be excluded.

Now it is true that the self appears to come into being in time, as it certainly grows to maturity in time;

and it is also true that the qualities of the self, or many of them, can be connected with the qualities of ancestral individuals and so traced to heredity. But the self is not merely a set of qualities, tendencies, or dispositions; it is a new centre of conscious life, a new source of conscious activity; and no approach has been made to a causal explanation of the core of self-hood which marks it off as the centre of its own world and the source of its own activity. None of the qualities, ideas, or actions of the self have any real existence except as qualities, ideas, or actions of the individual subject. It is the centre to which they are all related and without which they would not be. It is perfectly legitimate for a science, or a branch of science, to restrict itself to analysis and the elements which analysis discloses. In this way, the psychologist, if it suits him, may limit himself to mental presentations, ideas, and the like, and study their rise and history. In so doing the causal principle will be his guide, and he will attempt to trace causal connexions between the factors with which he deals. But all enquiry of this sort is abstract and incomplete, because it neglects the principle of unity, the self or subject, through which ideas live as facts of consciousness. If we could explain the constitution and being of the self out of these fragments of presentation or any other sort of elementary mind-stuff, then indeed the claim might be put forward that the working of mind itself had been explained and that it could be reduced to the form of causal connexion approved by the determinists. But if, as is the case, this has never been done, nor any real approach to doing it effected, then the appeal to heredity in explaining the character of the individual mind will not decide the question of its mode of activity.

The statement I am making is not an appeal to the unknown; it is an appeal against prejudice in interpreting what actually takes place.

There are two interpretations which are inadequate. One of these is the psychological determinism referred to, which, taking as its cue physical sequence, or physiological reflex, or perhaps the process of unhampered impulse, neglects the unity of mental process and leaves out of account the subjective principle through which mental facts are facts of mind. This is the error of the merely analytic understanding. The other inadequate view is the unpsychological indeterminism which regards free will as an incalculable force which somehow interferes with the orderly working of mind and turns our actions out of their normal causal direction. It is assigned perhaps to a self or pure ego which is regarded as without qualities or content. Here we find the opposite error. The unity of mental life is treated just as if it were an extra element, over and above the elements discovered by analysis, to which a separate function should be assigned analogous to the functions of the other elements. And this is to misinterpret the nature of the principle of unity. It has no place and no function apart from the diversity of qualities which are united in an individual consciousness. The pure ego of the theory of knowledge and of the theory of activity alike is a logical abstraction. It has no being separate or separable from the being of the self with its character. The reference of action to a characterless self would be worthless for all purposes of ethics; it is besides unsupported by introspection and would be equivalent to reference of actual changes to a logical abstraction or to an unfilled moment of time. Any

adequate theory of the mode of mental activity must recognise that the self is never without character, that it is a diversity in unity, that subject without qualities is empty just as qualities without subject are blind.

When we reflect upon the process of action as we are conscious of it, we are aware of a number of tendencies which may point in different directions; but it is the whole self that acts, and every tendency contributes to the result—even if it oppose it. Of these tendencies some are of the nature of impulse, others are due to reflexion and are of the nature of idea; and among the latter is the idea of moral value, of duty, or of goodness. It claims authority over volition, while the others present inducements to it or exercise driving—or drifting—force on it. The difference is fundamental for moral theory. It is also important for the present purpose, as showing that the consciousness of moral obligation is not something of the same order as the attractions of sense or worldly desire, and that it is not measurable on the same scale. The development of moral character consists in the gradual organisation of all active tendencies under this principle. In the process of this organisation it often happens that the idea of goodness is opposed to some impulse or desire. It is the same self that is at once conscious of duty and attracted by a conflicting desire. To what is the resultant conduct due? If it is due to the struggle of the conflicting motives (as they are called) in a character of definite qualities, then the 'strongest' motive must win the day, and the motives must therefore have each a degree of strength which can be measured on the same scale. It has already been seen that this method can only be carried

out on the assumption of psychological hedonism. And, if we decline to make this assumption, only one course is open to us. We must recognise that the self which is the origin of the action, and in which we distinguish both the idea of goodness and the desire for an object inconsistent with the good, is the real cause of the action and exercises a real choice. It is the nature of the self to act and thus, in certain circumstances, to choose or select between possible alternatives. This is neither a freak of unmotived willing nor an irruption of a pure ego into the realm of time. It is simply the real choice of a real self—a self which is not merely a diversity of tendencies and qualities, but the unity of that diversity. It is a continuous life which manifests itself by active selection of its own course, often in circumstances when factors in its own nature point in opposed directions. Each act tends to fashion and modify its character, for the act is its own act and its character persists and may develop into greater and greater harmony with an ideal. But in our experience this internal harmony in the self is never so completely achieved that there is no longer need for choice between competing alternatives of conduct.

What Kant calls freedom is on the negative side freedom from the dominion of sensuous impulse and on the positive side determination by moral law. The two forms of determination have no common measure, and Kant thinks it necessary to regard them as belonging to different worlds, so that freedom is banished to a transcendent region. But moral determination is actually experienced in every-day life. It is a factor in the normal process of volition. Kant's 'sensible' and 'intelligible' worlds are not two different worlds with distinct modes of volition.

They are combined in the voluntary action of man, in whom sensuous motives and the moral law strive together, and who himself is arbiter of them and of his fate.

Again, Kant speaks of the free volition as an act out of time, an act which forms the character which functions in time. In this way he cuts it off from our experience, which is in time; his freedom is a non-temporal act, and little more can be said of it. On the other hand, the view which I would put forward is that in moral action—indeed in all action above mere impulse—successive moments of time are brought into unity through the purpose which runs through them and which they realise. In some experiences we are conscious of a process of which the beginning and the end are present in the same span of time, as when I will the purpose and forthwith perform the act. More commonly the purpose can be fulfilled only at a more or less distant period; but even here, although the successive moments are not present together to consciousness, although a number of successive volitions may be required to bring the purpose to fulfilment, yet the idea of the end may be present throughout, guiding the whole process.

As the freedom which we realise is never indeterminateness, so also it is never out of time. But the time in which it functions is not the abstract time, conceived by mathematicians, which consists of discrete moments one of which disappears into the past (or into nothingness) as the next arrives. Time as experienced does not exhibit this feature with any exactness. Strictly speaking, time itself is not experienced; what we experience is a continuous change of object which is also a continuous change of activity. There are no such things in our experience

as absolutely discrete moments, each with its minute content of presentation or motive. The smallest distinguishable part of our experience always covers an appreciable duration, which is not a mere moment nor a certain number of moments. This is its time-span[1]; and the span may vary in length according to other conditions in our experience. One of these conditions is the interest or purpose or meaning which guides our effort.

Conscious action is thus in time, or determined by time, in a very different way from that in which we are apt to conceive, say, the successive ticks of a watch. The latter approach disconnectedness and mere succession. But the successive stages in purposive activity are united in our consciousness by the idea of the end to be realised, in the same way as successive tones may be felt or understood by us as a melody: so that the first already means the last and is retained in the last. The idea dominates the succession and gives unity to the whole: and yet such a unity as does not annul the reality of the parts but gives them a place in the whole.

In a character completely in accordance with the ideal of goodness the whole life would be regulated in this way—unified by the moral ideal to which each particular action would be contributory. We cannot say that it would have the actual experienced unity of a single time-span, far less that all one's life would be before one as a *totum simul*. The nature of our experience in which object is added to object, and the limitation of our attention in grasp and range, make this impossible for the finite consciousness. But yet each object would be seen in the light of its place and value for the whole, and each act would

[1] Cp. Royce, *The World and the Individual*, vol. 1, pp. 420 ff.

be a conscious approximation towards the realisation of the ideal. The mode of determination would in this case be determination by reference to an ideal whole—an ideal of goodness which expressed for the agent the meaning and purpose of his life. His idea of the good to be realised would determine its own realisation; the end would bring forth its own means. Here final causality or purpose would find unqualified expression.

In this description of the good will which is fully enlightened, freedom in the ordinary sense, the sense in which the term has been used hitherto as involving the choice between alternatives, is transcended. To the mind that is altogether set in goodness and has knowledge unlimited—for whom sense or desire has no temptations and the world no surprises—for such a mind there would be one clear purpose, one inevitable line of activity: there would no longer be a question between the higher and the meaner goal, the right road and the wrong. For such a mind freedom would consist simply in the absence of any opposition to its purposive activity and the completeness of its self-determination. If we form the conception of a Perfect or Infinite Mind it is in this sense that we must speak of such a mind as free. To speak of choice between alternatives is to suggest that another course than the best might be chosen, and this would be inconsistent with the idea of perfection.

A finite mind, limited in knowledge and power and distracted by desires other than the will to goodness, may yet have a partial measure of that self-determination which is complete only in the infinite. It is incompletely determined by forces external to itself. And if it stand—as it does stand—between the realm of nature and the

realm of goodness, conscious of the good and yet beset by many temptations to fall to a lower level, then the relative independence or partial spontaneity of such a mind may be exhibited in the power to direct its own path towards the goal of goodness or to allow it to lapse into evil. Its freedom will be neither complete independence of external determination, nor complete agreement with the ideal of goodness; but it will exclude total subordination to the forces beyond itself, and it will give opportunity for choosing and serving the good. In spite of its restrictions human activity will be recognised as possessing a core of spontaneity.

If we acknowledge this spontaneity we shall ascribe to the action of self-conscious beings a mode of causation which differs from that formulated to describe physical sequences. In the latter we attempt to measure the quantity of energy and show its constancy through the change of form in successive events. Or, if we are unable to reach an exact estimate, we still proceed on the postulate of uniformity and connect each difference in the consequent with some difference in the antecedent; and the psychologist applies the same formula to express the determination of mental events. But, in connecting difference with difference in this way, he is really assuming the sufficiency of the analytic method: for each difference is arrived at as the result of an analysis. We see in it a determining factor or a determined result; we treat it as something by itself with its own distinct measure of causal efficiency: so that the change in the result as a whole may be assigned to a changed factor in the antecedent. The more nearly correct it is to regard the whole experience under consideration as equivalent to the sum

of a number of discrete parts, the nearer will such an account approach to accuracy, as it does in physical sequences. On the other hand, the more the parts owe their nature to the whole to which they belong, the greater will be the danger of inaccuracy in connecting one portion of the consequent with a portion of the antecedent. The risk of error will be at its maximum in the case of the highest type of unity which we know—the unity of a spiritual being or self.

Now, it has been a fundamental point in the argument of this book that a living whole cannot be identified with the parts into which it is capable of analysis, nor be regarded as the sum of these parts. Even to say that it is something more than the sum of its parts is an inadequate expression of the truth. The parts have no existence of their own, and therefore cannot be summed. The whole is not an additive whole; no true whole is. The living bond, or principle of unity, moulds the nature of each part by incorporating it in the whole, so that neither the nature of the part nor its mode of operation remains the same as it would be did it exist in isolation. It is never the part that acts, but life or mind that acts. And the way of acting is life's way, or the mind's way, not simply the way of the part. The result is made manifest in the outer world by speech or movement; and these can be measured or compared one with another, so that we can identify the difference between two sets of results. But to attribute this difference to a given difference in the mental antecedents, and to regard this as settling the question, is to overlook the unity of self-consciousness which fuses stimuli or motives in its crucible, and works through them by its own laws and under the idea of freedom.

It is not strange that we should postulate a special mode of operation for self-consciousness. For it is a kind of being different from any which we can ascribe to material things. What would be strange would be for mental processes to have the same laws as the succession of material events. We may trace the growth and development of the individual mind. But what makes it a mind—a finite centre of experience and source of activity—we cannot tell. Neither the inherited structure nor the influence of the environment reveals this secret. What we know is that, as life always proceeds from life, so consciousness has always consciousness as its origin. But the entrance into space and time of a new finite centre of conscious life remains an event which we are unable to connect with any special feature of the cell from which its organism was developed or of the medium which supplied it with nourishment. And in its life as in its origin it is unique. The self is the cause of its own actions; and each action although connected with the past is yet a choice determined by itself, a true creation.

We hesitate to accept this view only because it seems opposed to a scientific postulate, or because, if accepted, it would seem to disturb at every moment the generalisation which science has established. But this result does not really follow. The self is thrown into an environment in which it can live and act only in conformity with natural law. It brings with it mental dispositions and it develops a character which tends to give it a stability of its own. Thus its freedom is limited in two ways. In the first place, it is limited by the physical conditions in the midst of which it is set, and its own organism is subject in all respects to these physical conditions. However the

organism behaves, and in whatever way we conceive the embodiment of the self, mind does not create material out of nothing nor does it produce or consume energy. The material processes which are mentally determined are such and such only as are consistent with physical laws. As mind acts through body, it is in all its activity limited by the laws to which its body is subject. Whatever interpretation we give of the manner of volition this holds. As already shown, the theory of freedom is not in conflict with the axiom of the conservation of energy, and is not affected by it, any more than is the theory of psychological determinism.

Nor, in the second place, is freedom in human nature divorced from its own past. It is the means by which character is established, and in which we look to the future to fulfil the promise and correct the errors of the time that has gone before. Life is broken up into periods by its contact with new and widening experience; it is at the mercy of an environment seemingly alien to it and full of surprises; and it grows to maturity along with a physical organism in which it is unable to stem the approach of decay. But yet it may approximate to a unity, and in its continuous process there is never a moment which is not reminiscent of the past and prophetic of the future. As its unity is always inclusive of diversity, so its freedom is a freedom which contains causation. We cannot, with Kant, say that there is only one free act, for that is to put freedom outside time altogether. But the free act unites successive moments of time into a unity of purpose. It connects them into a single span. It exhibits within its degree the spiritual principle which makes the stages of the process into members of a self-conscious whole.

Actions are systematised into the growing character of the self, and thus contribute to the determination of the acts which follow. But in every case the succeeding acts proceed from the self, not from the particular features which we distinguish as making up its character, nor even from all these features taken together. If, as I have urged, the self as a spiritual unity is always a much greater and deeper thing than the sum of these distinguishable parts, and its action is always more than their collective causation could have been, then this will hold for the developed as well as for the immature self. To the observer it will show a higher degree of calculable uniformity—for he knows more about it than he did before. And indeed the self, when character is fully formed, is less puzzled by surprises from the environment; but it still selects its own path freely, even when the variety of competing ways is diminished.

The freedom of a finite being is most clearly exhibited in selecting between alternatives of conduct; and it is in this respect that the ethical importance of freedom makes its first appeal. Man is thrown into the midst of competing interests and values or apparent values, and he is left to make his own choice among them. Yet he is not left entirely alone. From his race and his surroundings he receives predispositions and suggestions which set him on the road without compelling him to follow it. From his own reason and from social judgment he becomes aware of the differences of value which make one way preferable to another and authoritative for his will. No causal necessity compels him to take the way he ought to take. But, if he does so choose, and if he accustom himself to will the higher values in spite of the attractions of other

interests, then he achieves in this process a higher value than any other—that of the good will of a free man.

When, if ever, this character is firmly established, the need for repeated conflict in order that the good may be chosen disappears; the warring elements in his nature are brought into order, the hostile forces into subjection, and the good will ceases to display the struggle between higher and lower principles with which we are familiar. Goodness achieved through freedom, if completely realised, would exhibit to the observer a uniformity similar to that of the necessarily connected processes of nature; but the principle of action would remain different. It would be external in the one case and internal in the other. The free man may achieve uniformity through his freedom; upon the unfree man it would have to be imposed.

# XVIII

## THEISM

As we have seen, neither pluralism nor monism is able to give an interpretation of reality in which both the moral order and the order of nature are adequately recognised. The failure of the latter theory was mainly due to its refusal to admit the ideas of purpose and of freedom into its account. And its rejection of these ideas was due to the requirements of its theory rather than to an unprejudiced study of the facts. We have found that, even if experience does not compel us to admit the reality of purpose in nature and of individual freedom, at least it does not exclude these ideas, and it justifies our acceptance of them as postulates in the formation of a comprehensive view of reality as a whole.

We must therefore return to the point which was reached in examining the moral argument. The result of that examination had about it—I am willing to admit—a certain air of paradox. If we were asked to state the strongest objection to the theistic view of the world which is felt at the present time, we should reply without hesitation that it lies in the existence and power of evil in the world. The dilemma of Epicurus is still with us: If God wishes to prevent evil but cannot, then he is impotent; if he could but will not, he is malevolent; if he has both the power and the will, whence then is evil? If the world had been so constructed that only good appeared in it

and no evil, then (it is supposed) the theistic interpretation might hold; but it fails to account for a world like this of mingled good and evil. The paradox of which I have been guilty consists in taking this very fact of evil and founding upon it a theistic argument. Had everything in the world been harmonious, had there been no discord, pain, or evil, had all actual events brought forth moral values and been examples of moral law, then it might have seemed as if, in our explanation of the universe, we need not go beyond this one universal law, at once natural and moral, which would be displayed by all things and at all times. Now, such an explanation will not fit our world, just because of the discord between nature (including man) and morality. But the moral order, as well as the order of nature, is of the essence of reality; and they can be harmoniously united in one universe only when nature is understood not merely in its present appearance but as working out a purpose—that purpose being or including the making of moral beings. To repeat what has been already said, "If we do not interpret the world as purposive, our view of it cannot find room for both the natural order and the moral order. If we do interpret it as purposive, we must attribute an idea and purpose of good to the ground of the world": that is to say, our view will be an ethical theism. If the purpose be the production of finite selves who will freely realise goodness, we have a point of view from which it is possible to explain, in general terms, both the slow stages and frequent lapses in their moralisation, and also the nature of the medium in which this moralisation has to be achieved. Epicurus's dilemma has made an assumption in formulating its alternatives. It regards goodness as

The unity of the universe demands the purposive concept: and this concept must be the good.

something that can be produced by compulsion. It overlooks the possibility that the will to goodness means the creation of beings who will achieve goodness freely and whose freedom needs experience of all sorts of circumstances that it may develop into secure harmony with the moral order.

If we look at the theistic interpretation of reality from this point of view, we shall see that certain modifications have to be made in that doctrine of the unity of the world which led to and was expressed in the monistic theory. In the first place, the time-process as a whole, that is to say, the course of the world or system of nature, will have to be regarded as purposive. Taking it at any moment, we cannot say that it is perfect or a complete expression of a divine meaning: that divine meaning can only be gathered from its course as a whole, or from insight into the purpose which determines its course as a whole. And, in the second place, the finite individuals, in whom the spiritual nature of reality is manifested, must be acknowledged as agents in the accomplishment of the world-purpose, as possessing a real though limited power of initiative, and therefore a certain measure of independence. The time-process is the means whereby this freedom and independence are made contributory to complete ethical harmony or unity.

This ethical unity, be it noted, could not be arrived at in any other way, if the view is correct that the realisation of moral values requires freedom. At the same time, the attainment of this ethical unity, just because it requires freedom, involves in its process a certain modification of the doctrine of the actual unity of the universe. It is impossible to take any and every particular situation or

event, especially those involving human factors, and to say "here the divine is manifested," or "the perfection of the universe required just this act; anything else would have been inconsistent with the completeness of the whole." Yet in this way the monist must interpret things. In practice, he may be as ardent as any reformer in discussing the good and evil of conduct in contemplation, and in preferring good to evil; but, looking at the matter as a philosopher, he must regard the event as inevitable: anything else would have contradicted the nature of things, which is also the nature of God: to regret it or wish it undone is to quarrel with that which alone is—to sin against the holy ghost of logic. Now, unity of this sort is inconsistent with a due appreciation of the moral aspect of reality. The ethical unity of the universe is a unity to be attained. It does not belong in its completeness to any particular stage of the time-process, but only to its realised purpose. In its working out ethical unity requires a very real diversity, for it needs the cooperation of free individuals. We cannot identify these individuals with God or refer each action of theirs to the divine nature as its cause. As possessing in himself the purpose, or an idea of the purpose, of the whole time-process, God must be regarded as transcending the process itself; as communicating freedom to the individual minds whose being depends upon his, he must be regarded as transcending them also, for their actual volitions may be alien to his nature; and we may have to interpret this transcendence as self-limitation.

The theistic view of the world is so familiar to us that there is some difficulty in adopting an objective attitude

to it. We are accustomed to think of God as the author and ruler of the world, and as giving reality and power to our highest values; but fully to describe this attitude we have to think ourselves into a neutral and outside point of view—to reflect and explain instead of simply believing. At present we are seeking only to understand the theory, and to understand it critically, as was done in the case of pluralism and monism. The latter theory presents us with certain points of contrast; and other points of contrast, of a different kind, may also be obtained if we take into account another theory—that known as deism, which may be regarded as the direct contrary of pantheism.

With regard to deism, at any rate, we have no difficulty in adopting the requisite objectivity of attitude. For deism is scarcely more than a historical theory. We do not any longer meet with philosophers or theologians who profess themselves deists rather than theists. The deists were indeed a famous school of thinkers, especially in England in the eighteenth century; and yet it is not easy to give an exact definition of their creed, so as to distinguish it from that of their contemporary opponents. If we ask what deism means, a perfectly clear answer is not forthcoming either from the deists themselves or from their critics. But the best contemporary account known to me is that given by a prominent critic of the school of thought, Samuel Clarke[1]. He distinguished four classes of deists: (1) those who "pretend to believe the existence of an eternal, infinite, independent, intelligent Being; and...teach also that this Supreme Being

[1] *A Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God*, 9th ed. (1738), pp. 159 ff.

made the world: though at the same time...they fancy that God does not at all concern himself in the government of the world, nor has any regard to, or care of, what is done therein"; (2) those who also admit divine providence in nature; (3) those who, further, have some notion of the moral perfections of God; and (4) those who, in addition, acknowledge man's duties to God, and see the need for a future state of rewards and punishments—but all this only "so far as 'tis discoverable by the light of nature."

If we look into this classification of the forms of deism, we see that, for those of the first class, God is simply an external Creator, who made the world, set it under certain laws, and then left it alone. This is indeed the essential principle of deism and is commonly regarded as such by historians of philosophy and theology. But certain additions are made to the idea of God in the other forms of deism enumerated by Clarke. To God as creator must be attributed sufficient intelligence and power to produce the world, and the intelligence and power required may easily be regarded as so great as to be described as infinite. But other qualities might be added to this idea by different thinkers. God might be regarded as having foresight and control over the world as well as power to create it; he might be credited with moral attributes as well as with power and intelligence; and, when the world's course is run, he might intend a final judgment upon it and a just distribution of rewards and punishments.

All that is done in these secondary forms of deism is to add a characteristic here and there to the idea of God, without changing it in any essential way. God remains

for the deist an external Creator, as distinct from the world that he has made as a mechanic is from the machine that he turns out. God stands to the rest of the universe in the relation of one part to another part. He is a very unique part, certainly, for he has brought the remaining parts into being, and has some sort of control over them—a control which may be exercised on rare occasions or never at all. Different forms of deism are distinguished by the amount and kind of the control which they attribute in this way to God. And indeed the main distinction between the deists and their orthodox opponents in the eighteenth century lies just at this point. The latter attributed to God a greater measure of control over the world and more frequent manifestations of this control. In particular they found evidence of it in the Scriptures and in the miracles and prophecy therein recorded. The main topic of controversy concerned the credibility and importance of these recorded manifestations of divine activity: Did they actually happen and were they required? Or was natural religion (as it was called) adequate for the guidance of men? The deists questioned these manifestations, and held them to be superfluous: the light of nature sufficed to show the being of God and the obligation of morality. The ideal of the strict deist was a God who did not interfere. He had the power of a creator and the intelligence of a designer; he might also have the moral qualities of a provider of good things and of a judge between right and wrong; and he might foresee and even intend the course of the world; but, for the rest, he held his hand and he bided his time.

This idea of a non-interfering God is the conception that brings out most clearly the essential features of

deism[1]. Its inadequacy is apparent. To begin with, it establishes a very incomplete view of the unity of the universe. Things are indeed all connected because they have all been created by God and are all governed by the laws which he ordained in creating them. But, once created, they are left to their own fate, though controlled by laws which were regarded as due to the arbitrary fiat of the divine will. Men stand related to one another in many ways, cooperating and competing, but each working out his own destiny; man and nature stand over against one another in help and hindrance; but God stands aloof, infinitely above all, not mingling in the strife of the beings he has made—at any rate, not until that far-off divine event when the whole world will come up for judgment. God's work is done, and things now go on much the same—or altogether the same—as they would do if there were no God. Since the creation he has rested; though it may be that, when the created world has run its course and has to hand in its accounts, there will be a new period of divine activity.

Let us ask what difference a doctrine of this sort makes in our manner of interpreting the world as a whole. God is necessary to account for the beginning of the world; his presence may again be found at the end of the world. But apart from origins and endings, what difference does his being make to our view of the actual world in its historical course? Suppose a deist to change his mind on

[1] Though it does not agree exactly with the historical usage of the term. As Mr C. C. J. Webb points out (*Studies in the History of Natural Theology*, 1915, p. 348) the term 'deism' was commonly used to signify belief in the sufficiency of natural religion independently of revelation, and writers ordinarily called deists (*e.g.*, Herbert of Cherbury) did not always deny the possibility of direct communion between the soul and God.

the question of origin. He is aware that there are arguments which some have accepted in favour of the eternity of matter and the equal eternity of the laws which have in the fulness of time given birth to man and his varied activity. But he has held that the arguments in favour of a divine creation of the world are of superior cogency, though he admits that his view depends on balancing the strength of opposed arguments. Suppose now that further reflexion convinces him that, on the whole, the balance of argument is in favour of the theory of the eternity of matter and law. How will his view of the world be affected? He adopts a new theory as to the way in which it originated; he modifies or transforms his expectation of what is to happen in the end. But, as to the actual world and the course of history, what difference does it make? Matter and law remain the same; of man's mind he may have held before the same view that he holds now. Surely a God that does not interfere will hardly be missed.

On this ground it appears to me that the idea of God, as conceived by the deists, fails to give adequate unity to our view of reality. Their theory gave an imperfect view of the whole; and the imperfection was due to the method which they shared with most of their contemporary opponents. This method was the method of Rationalism. Various attempts have been made to define Rationalism; and the definition in favour with some recent writers lays stress on its negative results: rationalism is identified with a destructive criticism only. "Rationalism," says its historian[1], "is the mental habit of using reason for the destruction of religious belief." The definition seems to

[1] A. W. Benn, *The History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (1906), vol. 1, p. 4.

me confused. It is the method which we wish to understand; the results will take care of themselves. It is besides historically unfair. It implies that the so-called rationalists intended to reach negative results before they set out, and were therefore governed by prejudice. Further, it disregards the large amount of agreement between the two sides in the great controversy. Reason was appealed to by the orthodox opponents of the deists as much as it was by the most negative of their followers. Both sides professed to follow reason, Clarke and Butler as much as Collins and Tindal. The essential point in the method called rationalism was the limited view taken of reason; and this feature was common to the writers in both camps. I do not undervalue the immense service which these writers, on both sides of the controversy, and the whole century to which they belonged, rendered to the cause of clear thinking. But their method, if clear, was also somewhat narrowly restricted. By 'reason' they meant the passage from proposition to proposition by the ordinary processes of deduction and induction. They brought to light what could and what could not be arrived at in this way; but they sought to apply to the interpretation of the universe as a whole the same kind of intellectual process as that by which one passes from part to part in the examination of finite things or from proposition to proposition in a chain of reasoning. They ignored what has been called the synoptic method—the 'reason' as distinguished from the 'understanding' of Plato and Kant and Hegel. They distrusted the intellectual insight which achieves a view of the whole, even although it is willing to test that view by its adequacy to comprehend the facts. By their more pedestrian method they ought never to

have reached the idea of God at all, and never would have reached it, had it not been provided for them by tradition.

Hence their difficulty in connecting their idea of God with their idea of the world. Hence also the line the controversy took, and the discussion as to whether and how much God interfered in the order of nature. On the one hand the non-interfering God of the deists seemed a superfluous hypothesis for interpreting the actual world. He was treated as a sort of absentee landlord, who failed even to get in his rents. On the other hand the God that interferes on occasions to set things right seems an equally difficult idea: for so long as he does not intervene, the world must be interpreted as going on without him; and when he does intervene, it must be to upset his own laws: so that the doctrine as a whole appears to be only an incomplete deism. Thus it appears that deism in its essential form, as the theory of a God that does not interfere with the world and is external to it, is at the opposite pole from pantheism, the theory which identifies the world and God. Somewhere between these two the theistic world-view must find its place.

How then are we to conceive the world in the light of the idea of God? We have discarded the pantheistic answer to the question, which identifies the world with God; and we have equally rejected the deistic view which regards God as a being external and aloof. But the positive conception is more difficult to define. It must be something intermediate between the two impossible extremes. Neither identity on the one hand, nor complete distinction, on the other hand, will satisfy our quest for a view of the relation of the world to God. It would seem, therefore,

Does this represent a slip back into the old traditional form or does he presume to have established his point & is now looking

that we are forced to adopt a principle of selection amongst the facts of the world; and selection is an awkward business and hard to apply without arbitrariness, still harder to apply without the appearance of arbitrariness. Yet arbitrariness must be avoided. We may not say "I see God's hand here, in the providence that saved my fall, when ruin encompassed others; but I cannot see it there, where misfortune awaited myself." If there is to be selection it must be in accordance with a definite principle, and that principle must be well grounded.

Where can we find a guiding principle? Is there anywhere in the world a standard for discriminating the divine from that which is not divine, so that we may lay hold of the standard and by means of it get a point of view from which reality as a whole may be seen as a revelation of God? If there is any such, we must find it in one or other of the realms into which we have found the real in our experience to divide itself—in the realm of nature and its laws, or in that of finite selves and their wills, or in that of intrinsic values. But the first will not serve, for we have seen that imperfection clings to it. For the same reason the second region—that of finite selves—is an insecure guide; and besides, we have attributed to these selves a freedom which is inconsistent not indeed with their dependence upon God, but with their being regarded as a true mirror of the divine nature. There remains then the realm of values—an ideal realm, very imperfectly realised in our experience, and only incompletely conceived in our consciousness. It is possible for us to mistake the true meaning of these ideal values; but the possibility of error does not affect the validity of truth when discovered. The values are there, and in our apprehension

of them we have at least a guide which gives us a principle for selecting between the worthy and the unworthy, and enables us to attain a certain insight into the purpose of the whole.

Is it a misleading instinct which has led men almost uniformly to use the adjective 'divine' in speaking of these higher values—of beauty and truth and goodness? The poets and artists have used this language in speaking of beauty; and though they may not have meant to convey a dogma by it, they intended it to express their admiration of what was highest. The philosophers have often employed similar language, when their theory allowed them to see more in the world than mechanical law and to regard the quest for truth as of greater significance than dialectical dispute. And to the moralist it has often been almost an axiom that goodness and God mean the same thing. Of the other values I will not speak, for my topic is the moral values and their bearing on our interpretation of reality.

Now of the moral order of the universe we have discovered that it does belong to the order of reality, and further that it cannot be fitted into a pantheistic conception of that order. Its distinction from, and yet intricate relation to, the natural order, and its implication of freedom in the lives which it claims to rule, forbid the easy solution that the All is simply One. But if the moral order is not altogether sundered from the natural order, if the universe is really a universe and not a multiverse, then we must hold that the moral order is the order of that one mind whose purpose nature and man are slowly fulfilling. Here therefore we have a key to the theistic interpretation of the world. The moral order expresses the

divine nature; and things partake of this nature in so far as they conform to that order or manifest goodness.

This gives us the principle of which we are in search. The theistic universe is fundamentally ethical. The central point in our idea of God is not the pantheistic conception of a substance of infinite attributes or an Absolute free from all determinations; nor is it the deistic conception of an external Creator or First Cause. Neither 'Own Cause' nor 'First Cause' will be our conception, but—if we must speak of cause at all—then it will be Final Cause. And Final Cause must mean the purpose of realising goodness. The difficulty of the conception of Creation is mixed up with the difficulty of the relation of the time-process as a whole to ultimate reality; and with that difficulty I am not making any attempt to deal. But the notion of Creation involves a more essential point than the idea either of a beginning *in* time or of a beginning *of* time. It involves the idea of God as the ground or support of the world—not merely its beginning—for without him it could not at any moment exist. For this reason, while we may not see God in each natural event, we must yet look through nature to God and see his mind in its final purpose.

I have already spoken of nature as the medium for the production and perfection of goodness in finite minds. This interpretation we may give—indeed, we must give—if we accept the moral and the natural orders as belonging together. But it does not follow that it will explain everything in nature. It would be too proud an assumption to assert that the whole of nature, of which we know only the barest fragment, has no other purpose than this one which concerns ourselves. Omniscience is a foible

against which the modest philosopher should be on his guard. What other purposes than this there may be in the wealth of worlds which people space, or even in the small world known to ourselves, we cannot tell; and, except as a matter of speculative interest, it does not concern us to know. On such questions the only safe attitude is one of provisional agnosticism. But these doubtful issues do not interfere with our interpretation of our own consciousness and the world which environs it. The certainty of the moral law is not affected by anything that lies hidden among the unexplored recesses of the starry heavens.

The same conception of purpose, which guides the theist in the explanation of the world of nature, must serve him also in the interpretation of the realm of finite spirits. They too must be interpreted through their purpose, and this purpose will be, as before, the realisation of goodness. But there is this difference. Nature is a medium only; *through* it the end is to be reached. But minds are not a mere medium: it is *in and by* them that values are to be realised. They must themselves attain these values and not merely receive them. To nature we can ascribe no power or freedom of its own; each of its operations must be regarded as prescribed for it. But finite spirits themselves either contribute to working out the world-purpose or else oppose their wills to it.

The question of freedom has been already discussed, and the validity of the idea defended. And I may now venture to express the opinion that it is essential to the theistic interpretation of reality. So many theists are convinced determinists, that this statement may have an appearance of arrogance. Yet no other view seems to me

really open. If there is no freedom in man's volition, and each act is rigidly determined by his inherited disposition and his environment, then it is plain that every act of man is really caused by that being who is the author at once of his nature and of the world in which he lives. To his Creator, and only to his Creator, it ought to be imputed. And, if this is so, we are left without any kind of hypothesis by which to explain the preference of the worse to the better course, or to render that preference consistent with the goodness of God. On the determinist theory, as on the assumption of freedom, man and nature may be purposive, and in the end harmony may be established and goodness triumph. But, on the former theory, we can think of no reason why goodness should not have been established from the outset, or why men should have been formed with dispositions that led them to sin. The evil in the world has to be referred to God as its author; and ethical theism falls to the ground.

If ethical theism is to stand, the evil in the world cannot be referred to God in the same way as the good is referred to him; and the only way to avoid this reference is by the postulate of human freedom. This freedom must be a real freedom, so that it may account for the actual choice of evil when good might have been chosen. We have therefore to face the inference that there is a limitation of the divine activity: that things occur in the universe which are not due to God's will, though they must have happened with his permission, that is, through his self-limitation. Nor does this view justify the objection that we are making the divine nature finite; for, if it is conceived as limited, it is not limited by anything outside itself. Rather we may say that a higher range of

power and perfection is shown in the creation of free beings than in the creation of beings whose every thought and action are pre-determined by their Creator.

On the other hand, individual freedom is not, and cannot be, unlimited: otherwise each free being would require a world of his own, and there would be no universe. And clearly man's freedom is restricted by the conditions both of heredity and of environment. The range of his selection is limited by the experience which gives content to his life, as well as by the inherited tendencies which are his from the beginning of his career. These afford ample opportunity for freedom in the development of his activity, but not unrestricted openings for any and every kind of life. A man cannot at will choose to be a mathematician, an artist, a statesman, or even a millionaire. But there is one form of activity which is never closed, and that is the realisation of moral values; one choice before every man, the choice of good or evil.

This is the limitation of human freedom which applies to man as a part of nature; and it is such that the line which nature restricts least, and leaves most open to free determination, is that concerned with the production and increase of moral values. But the more important aspect of the limitation remains. Man's freedom must surely be limited from the side not of nature only, as the medium in which it is exercised, but also of God. How then are we to conceive this limitation without man being altogether absorbed by God? The world as a time-process has a certain unity through natural law, but this law fails to cover or to account for the volitions of free minds; it has a further unity in the moral order, but this unity is still an ideal and never in our experience completely realised.

Its full unity must therefore come from the fact that it is a purposive system, in which nature is the medium of moralisation, and finite minds are the agents who, in free alliance and free struggle, work out this unity in achieving their own perfection. The purpose exists eternally in the divine mind, and the time-process is the scene on which finite minds bring it about. Their agency must therefore be somehow directed—or, as the theologians say, overruled—towards the attainment of this end.

But may not the time-process end, after all, simply in confusion, perhaps in disaster, and its purpose fail? This is indeed a suggestion that has found a place in many theologies, which have imagined a hostile spirit—a prince of this world—who, although of lower rank and power, can yet frustrate the designs of the Supreme Mind by his implacable enmity. This is only one of the ways in which the unity of nature and morality is denied. It presents a vivid picture of the world struggle, but no solution of the universal problem, beyond denying that there is a true universe. Short of this supposition, and on the lines of our own reflexion, may it not be imagined that the world-plan meets only with partial success tempered by partial failure, that multitudes of finite spirits fail for ever to realise the good that is in their power? Freedom is a dangerous gift, and is the danger only to the recipient? In conferring this gift on finite beings may not the Supreme Mind have called into existence a power which he can no longer control, in the only way in which free spirits can be controlled?

This suggestion, again, cannot be refuted by conclusive argument. It is less violent and imaginative than the previous suggestion, but it is equally inconsistent

with any view of a complete unity of the universe. My argument has been all along that, ultimately, the unity of the universe must be conceived as ethical; and this conception would bring moral discord into the heart of things. Can we regard the Supreme Mind as having so little foresight as to be unable to see the result of his own purpose? It has usually been maintained that this must be so, if free will be admitted. It is said that foreknowledge is inconsistent with freedom, so that, if men are free, their volitions cannot be foreseen even by divine intelligence, and God must be frequently taken by surprise by their actions. This view calls for examination, for it seems to me that it tends to misinterpret the nature of free activity, and that it assumes that divine and human foreknowledge follow the same method.

A man's free actions proceed from himself, that is, from his character. But what is his character? It is not simply a combination of distinct factors whose growth may be traced separately. None of these factors has any reality except in the unity of the conscious life; and this unity is not open to the inspection of an observer. The latter's knowledge of another self is always external and therefore incomplete. He is thus liable to surprises, not because an incalculable force may irrupt here and there into the otherwise orderly processes of volition, but because there is something within the circle of a man's character and dispositions that can never be adequately known to another, and that something is its centre. But God's knowledge need not be external, like that of the human observer. To him man's mind must be known from within, and, at the same time, without the obscurity and imperfection with which the man knows himself.

Even this, it may be urged, does not show that a choice which is truly spontaneous can be foretold. Such a choice implies a real possibility of opposites, a real absence of pre-determination, so that it could not be foretold even by complete knowledge from within of a man's character. Perhaps this is so. But it does not follow that divine foreknowledge works by the same method as human anticipation. It need not be of the nature of an inference from character as the cause to action as the effect. We can conceive another way, though its use is not open to us. The event which we perceive is never strictly instantaneous; it has a certain duration, very short, indeed, but not infinitesimal. This is our time-span, and in it we see at a glance what is really a succession. If this time-span were considerably enlarged, we should have immediate knowledge of a longer series, for example, of a succession of actions in which a resolution is made and carried out. Within the time-span differences of past and future do not interfere with immediacy. Why then should not all time be seen as one by an infinite intelligence? Assuming that God's knowledge is not limited to a finite span of the time-process, the whole course of the world's history will be seen by him in a single or immediate intuition. The question how a particular event, such as the action of a man, comes about—whether by free will or by mechanical necessity—will make no difference to the immediacy of that intuition. What we call foreknowledge will be just knowledge: past and future, equally with present, lie open to the mind of infinite time-span.

For this reason it appears to me that freedom is not related to foreknowledge in the same way as it is to pre-determination. Universal determination contradicts

freedom; universal knowledge does not. And we cannot suppose that God, to whose view all time lies open, would call into existence spirits whose activity would frustrate his purpose in their creation.

Apart, therefore, from solutions which limit either the power or the knowledge or the goodness of God, the theistic world-view must maintain not only that the moral purpose of the universe is eternally present in the mind of God, but also that it will attain actual fulfilment in the finite minds through whom it is being worked out. And for this reason God must be regarded as not far off from each individual spirit. In what way this divine providence, direction, or overruling actually operates is a problem which philosophy cannot undertake to solve without assistance from that range of experience which I have not taken into account—the facts of the religious consciousness.

But one result emerges. I have said before, and the assertion followed from the preceding argument, that, in interpreting the world, theism has to proceed by selection when it seeks in the world or in men traces of the divine. The principle of selection cannot be anything else than the moral order which has been taken as the ground from which we must explain the course of the world. In all goodness we must see the manifestation of the divine purpose, in all evil a temporary failure in its realisation. In so far as men strive for its realisation they are ethically at one with God; in so far as they lose sight of this end they are ethically at variance with him. And this principle is not arbitrary; it follows directly from the position given to the moral order and from the way in which the order of nature and finite minds is related thereto. The old moralists who explained 'conscience' as meaning 'know-

ledge with God,' may have given a fanciful derivation of the word. But the idea which prompted the derivation was not far wrong. In the moral consciousness we have some apprehension of the value which gives meaning to the world and which has been interpreted as a divine purpose; and in moral practice we cooperate towards the fulfilment of this purpose.

The theistic view of the world which I have been considering is definitely an ethical view. It was led up to by an enquiry into the facts of value in the world and by the conception of a moral order of the world; and it issues in a view which finds the moral purpose of the world to be the purpose of a Supreme Mind and which regards finite minds as attaining unity with this Supreme Mind not by the absorption of their individuality but by the perfecting of their character in cooperating with the divine purpose. Other values than the ethical have dropped out of sight in the course of the argument. Yet the general view which has been reached might be extended so as to cover them also. Wherever there is intrinsic worth in the world, there also, as well as in moral goodness, we may see a manifestation of the divine. God must therefore be conceived as the final home of values, the Supreme Worth —as possessing the fulness of knowledge and beauty and goodness and whatever else is of value for its own sake.

This view has not been put forward on account of its religious importance. That is a side of things which I have hardly ventured to touch. It is given as an interpretation of reality which takes equal account of existents and laws and moral values. And, as such, it is neither inadequate to cover the facts of experience, as any

naturalistic theory is, nor does it betray the hopeless incongruity on fundamental points which we find both in pluralism and in monism. At the same time, it is not contended that the view solves all questions or that it does not raise problems of its own. The solutions it gives are for the most part general; they offer a principle of explanation rather than an explanation of each event in detail. If particulars can be explained by it, it is mostly by the help of the religious consciousness which claims a more intimate apprehension of God than morality can offer. And the conception of a unity which is not yet but is to be realised, and which when realised will be ethically complete, though individualities remain distinct, raises speculative problems. Is God the Absolute? it may be asked; and if not, is he not therefore finite, so that the universe is incompletely unified by the idea of God? It may be answered that, if by the Absolute is meant the sum-total of reality, then there are real events and real beings which do not as we see them manifest the divine nature, so that God and the Absolute will not be identical. But there is nothing outside God in the sense of being fully independent of his being and will. The independence of finite beings is a restricted independence communicated by the divine will. If we conceive God as unable to limit himself in this way, then this conception also limits his power. It appears to me that the idea of the self-limitation of God involves no greater difficulty than the idea of the manifestation or appearance of the Absolute in things and persons. And, on the most rigid theory of the Absolute, the diversity of its appearances must be admitted—even if they are held to be only the appearance of diversity. These questions, however, call for further discussion.

Supplementary Readings: -

Studies in Christian Theism - W. R. Matthews

Faith of a Moralist - A. E. Taylor (Vol I)

The Intelligible World - Wilbur Urban

# XIX

## THE IDEA OF GOD

When Faust was faced with a straight question as to his belief in God, he tried to put the question by by asking another question, "Who dare name him, and who confess 'I believe in him'?" The terms in which the answer, or the warning, is expressed are reminiscent of an old belief which the intellect had long discarded, the belief in the magical virtue of the name—as if by naming God we were guilty of the blasphemy of attempting to control him. But they have also a more significant meaning; and we shall do well to remember the warning they convey if we proceed, as we must, to elucidate the idea of God which has been reached. Can any idea be adequate for describing the Infinite? May it not be that the categories by which we convey knowledge of the world and life fail and must fail to render to us the meaning of the whole? This seems to have been the thought in Goethe's mind. Yet, with the licence of a poet, he proceeds to disregard his own caution—to put his belief into words and to name the unnameable. His confession of faith may perhaps be described as an emotional pantheism—a worship of the All, and yet, in the same breath, of that special manifestation of it, whatever it may be, which masters us in moments of most intense feeling. The combination is not uncommon. Emotional intensity is regarded as somehow revealing ultimate reality; and yet all things are in essence one. But

the two views differ in origin and in result. On the one hand, there is the conclusion at which philosophical theory has arrived—the all-embracing unity, the God or reality of pantheism. On the other hand, it is assumed that we feel this reality when passion is high, and we are encouraged to name it as we choose—bliss, heart, love, God. In this manner are united ideas which have been gathered along the two different ways which lead to theological doctrine: the way of immediate experience which induces the poet to give the divine name to the emotion in which, for the moment, his life is concentrated, and the philosopher's way, which Goethe also followed, and which led him, as it has led many others, to see all reality as one.

The two ways are different in their inception and in the direction which they take. One starts from an immediate experience of the individual, the other follows the course of philosophical reflexion. But they meet in the mind of man, and their objects are fused in the idea of a reality which is conceived as the highest. The experience may be emotional merely, after the manner of Goethe's description; but it is an emotion which transfuses the whole personality and lifts it out of its isolation into harmony with its environment; and he gives it the name of love because in love the individual finds in the life of another the complement and completion of his own, and feels that, for this new-found unity, nothing else matters and the world outside is indifferent and of no account. In its more specifically religious phase this experience has a further meaning or aim. It brings the individual who has it into relation with a power or reality greater than himself, through which he is reconciled to life and in which he finds security for the ideals which appeal

Either "experience" of a subject, which carries it some artificials or else start with an objective reality as a substrate to which every test may be applied.

to him as of supreme worth. When reflexion supervenes upon this experience, the dangerous process of describing and naming begins. The power to which the individual trusts for reconciliation and security—in a word, for salvation—is conceived as beyond the reach of hostile or indifferent forces, as willing the good which the worshipper conceives, and as able to carry out what he wills. Starting in this way from the facts of religious experience, the religious man becomes involved in the same problems, concerning the relation of nature and values to one another and of both to the ultimate ground of reality, which meet the philosopher in his attempt to arrive at an interpretation of the universe.

In the argument set forth here the subject has been approached exclusively from the latter point of view. The facts of the religious consciousness have not been taken into account because they lie beyond that special question concerning the relation of the moral order to the order of existence which we set out to determine. But any solution of the more general problem of reality will have its bearing on the content and attitude of finite experience. The view which we form of the universe cannot remain a mere intellectual concept. Philosophy is not a game which we play out and finish, leaving the players refreshed perhaps or stimulated, but otherwise unchanged. It affects our whole attitude, emotional and active as well as intellectual, to the world in which we have to play our part. We cannot think of the world as of one kind and feel towards it or adapt our action towards it as if it were of an entirely different sort.

Let us look for a moment upon the differences produced upon our subjective attitude, and upon the meaning

we put upon individual and, in particular, religious experience, by our interpretation of reality as a whole. It is clear that man cannot be separated from the universe of which he forms a part. If the world is without God, the soul of man cannot be influenced by the divine spirit or rely upon it for the security of his ideals of value. The metaphysic of naturalism, for instance, would inevitably force upon us a naturalistic interpretation of religion as well as of other forms of experience. We may avoid philosophy altogether in order that faith may have free course. But, if thought be let in at any point, it will inevitably tend to leaven the whole mass of experience. It has been said indeed by a follower of Ritschl[1], that it makes no difference to faith what the religious man's philosophy may be: whether he be materialist or idealist in philosophy, his sense of religious values, his faith, may remain the same. But it will not remain the same if he begins to think about it. Thought refuses to be confined by artificial boundaries. The Christian who thinks cannot keep God in his soul and leave him out of his world. The materialist who is convinced that matter and motion are the only realities, and the naturalist who repeats much the same thing in more modern phraseology, must account for religious experience by the same factors, and no others, as those by which they account for ordinary events, and they must explain the illusion of God as they explain a will-o'-the-wisp. If religion persists side by side with a materialistic world-view, it is only because thinking has been blocked and philosophy in any full sense does not exist.

Not every system of metaphysics can vindicate, or

[1] W. Herrmann, *Die Metaphysik in der Theologie* (1876), p. 17.

even can admit, the validity of the ideas involved in religious experience. Naturalism, as has been said, cannot do so; and the consequence is important. For, in the minds of the last generation and even of our own generation, the philosophical theory of naturalism has been so closely connected with the achievements of natural science that it has been regarded as one of the results of these achievements or even as identical with natural science itself. The negations of naturalism have been mistaken for conclusions of science; and this confusion has had results of profound significance. It has been taken as shutting out reasonable men from participation in the spiritual ideals on which mankind has been nourished. During many years and for many minds, some of whom are still amongst us, the teachings of science and its bearings upon life and conduct were interpreted by the essays and lectures of Huxley. We may therefore turn for an elucidation of this point to what he said in a famous discourse on 'The Physical Basis of Life[1].' In it he expressed the view that in our conception of conscious life, "as elsewhere, matter and law have devoured spirit and spontaneity. And," he went on to say, "as surely as every future grows out of past and present, so will the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is co-extensive with knowledge, with feeling, and with action. The consciousness of this great truth weighs like a nightmare, I believe, upon many of the best minds of these days. They watch what they conceive to be the progress of materialism, in such fear and powerless anger as a savage feels, when, during an eclipse, the great shadow creeps over the face of the sun.

[1] *Lay Sermons* (1893), p. 123.

The advancing tide of matter threatens to drown their souls; the tightening grasp of law impedes their freedom; they are alarmed lest man's moral nature be debased by the increase of his wisdom."

I quote these sentences only as evidence of the effect which the doctrines of naturalism, and the scientific hypotheses identified with naturalism, have had upon the attitude of thinking men. The 'advancing tide' seemed to them to sweep away every vestige of human freedom and to discredit the whole realm of spiritual ideals. A generation ago the 'best minds' of the day were not only possessed by the glories of scientific progress, they were also obsessed by naturalism. Some eagerly welcomed its utterances as prophetic, and as heralding an era of emancipation from outworn creeds; many more accepted them out of loyalty to truth, but with reluctance, because they brought bitter disillusionment; yet others turned from the doctrines in despair, if not in revolt, and sought to place the values of life in a region which had no point of contact with that disclosed by science. This last attitude involves an assertion of the complete independence of the realm of values. It is the note not only of the Ritschlian school, who reacted from the naturalism into which the Hegelians of the Left had drifted, but also of others who have few points of sympathy with the religious teaching of that school; and its influence may be traced in some of the later writings of Huxley himself. From this point of view the teachings of natural science will be regarded as summed up in naturalism; but, at the same time, a severe and lofty standard of ethical value will be maintained, from which the ways of the universe itself may be judged. Science may teach us the painful road to the

end in which, after millennia of misery, conscious life is fated to disappear. But the process may be looked at from another point of view as well; and man's consciousness of the eternal validity of ethical values will vindicate his superiority to that natural process of which he is, nevertheless, simply an inexplicable product. For this way of thinking there are really two worlds having nothing in common with one another—the actual world of nature and the world of values. Yet these two worlds meet in the mind of man. The idea of one of them is framed to account for his experience in sense-perception; the idea of the other to systematise his judgments of good and evil. But explanation fails of the mind in which they are united. It is a product or by-product of the world of nature, and that is a mystery. It has also insight into the altogether diverse realm of values, and that is a greater mystery.

Were we reduced in principle to this way of looking at life—were existence and value unrelated or related only by opposition—there could be no philosophy of reality as a whole; our thought would fall into two disconnected and incongruous sections. Ideals and values would be capable of being cherished only by men turning their minds away from science; for those who held to science, only a naturalistic explanation would be possible of the ideals which give dignity to human life. The mind can be relieved of the obsession of naturalism only by the discovery that it is not involved in the principles or conclusions of natural science: that the real world does not consist of an aimless dance of electrons or corpuscles, and that mind or spirit is a more fundamental reality than they. A formal refutation of naturalism

has not been attempted here. That has been done elsewhere and by others[1]. But the assumed opposition between the world of nature and the moral order has been already dealt with; and it has been shown to involve a twofold defect. It rests on a view of nature from which the conception of purpose is without adequate reason excluded, and its view of the moral order is apt to be summed up in a narrow interpretation of moral values.

The view of life which recognises the importance of the moral values, and the experience which acknowledges them and relies on their persistence, are thus bound up with a philosophy in which naturalism is negated, and therefore with some form of idealism. But idealism is a word of many meanings, and indeed, in the history of speculation, idealistic theories have not maintained their unity of type to the same extent as materialism or naturalism has done. In the original meaning of the term, idealism is the theory that reality consists of ideas or universals, which are not themselves thoughts but the objects of thought. Among these ideas or universals, the great idealists from Plato onwards have always recognised those values on which our minds set store, and the nature of which has been already investigated—such ideals as those of goodness, truth, and beauty. These, it is held, are the true realities and as such must persist eternally. The eternal validity of the ideas may have nothing to do with their realisation in consciousness. But at any rate they are somehow present in our consciousness here and now; and we are sustained by the assurance that the values which we cherish have a validity which is independent

[1] See especially J. Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, 4th ed. (1915).

of their inadequate realisation in the world or recognition by its inhabitants.

> It fortifies my soul to know
> That, though I perish, Truth is so.

Further, in the great historical systems of this form of idealism, beginning with Plato himself, mind is not left out of account in the final view of things. By way of the ideas a synthesis is reached which combines all that is real and which can be best described by the term consciousness or experience. This individual whole which comprises all reality may therefore be described as Infinite Mind. Herein the ideals which give dignity and worth to finite lives are eternally real. If we live in the light of these ideals we shall rise above the petty cares of our own, or other finite, selves; we shall cease to grumble at the events of our world—that curiously distorted appearance of reality—and, by high acquiescence in the eternal order, we shall attain that 'intellectual love of God' in which Spinoza placed our blessedness and freedom. In this way this first form of idealism frequently finds expression in a pantheistic world-view.

On the other hand the second, or as it may be called Berkeleyan, form of idealism starts from a pluralistic point of view. It does not attempt to construct reality out of universals or ideas. It begins with the certainty of individual or finite minds—different centres of conscious life—as our first clue to the nature of reality and of value, and proceeds to construct its system of the universe on that basis. If it reaches a theistic conclusion, its idea of God will not be the idea of a system of universals but that of a conscious spirit who can be in some degree understood through the analogy of finite mind. The finite mind

is thus of vastly more significance in this form of idealism than in the other—for which indeed it always remains a puzzle. The theory maintains the reality of the finite self in which values are progressively apprehended and realised; and its doctrine of God supports the faith that values will be conserved in the world of our experience and in the consciousness of individual minds, while, at the same time, it shows the unity and purpose that belong to the course of the world and to the life of man.

(3) The view at which the argument of this work has arrived is an idealism of this latter type. It recognises the real world of persons as charged with the discovery and realisation of values, and it interprets the apparatus of life and its environment as subordinated to this supreme purpose. Its characteristic is that it maintains the reality both of God and of man in its conception of the universe; and, just on this account, the conception has its own difficulties. The reality of the finite mind seems threatened by the assertion of an infinite mind, and the truth of this assertion seems shaken by any vestige of spontaneity being left to the finite: so hard is it (as has been said) to find room for both God and man in the same universe. On the other hand, the theory which identifies God with the universe seems to engulf all difficulties—may we not say all contradictions?—in one all-inclusive reality. What idea can we form of God which can be held without contradiction and without denying the reality of the individual life of which we are conscious?

To answer this question we must recall the way in which the idea of God has been reached. It has been arrived at by means of an enquiry into ethical values and

their relation to the realm of existence. Within reality as a whole a distinction may be drawn between higher and lower, more or less complete or perfect, manifestations of reality. The distinction is expressed in the old concept of the scale of being; at present it is more familiar to us as the distinction between degrees of reality. If we attempt to draw out a scale or degrees of this kind, the moral order or moral law may be placed at the summit, and a direct inference may be made to God as the conscious ground of this moral order. The argument in this form is well known; but I have not relied upon it, chiefly for one reason in particular. If the moral order by itself is made to involve the idea of God, then this idea is apt to have for its content simply the moral order; and we find that all we have done is to give the moral order a new name and not to have established the reality of a living self-conscious being as the ground of the universe. My argument accordingly had a wider range. It was founded not on the moral order by itself but on its relation to the order of existing things. Since existence and value belong to the same universe they must have the same ultimate ground. The order of nature and of finite minds, as we know them, do not, however, manifest ethical values with any exactness or purity; in their existing nature they are out of harmony with the moral order. But harmony may be reached if it is allowable to assume purpose in the world and freedom in man. Nature can then be regarded as an appropriate medium for the realisation of value by minds finite but free. The harmony is a relation which stands in need of realisation; and the purpose of realising it requires consciousness in the ground of reality as a whole. This ground or principle of reality will therefore involve

the will to goodness as well as intelligence and power; and this is what we mean by God.

But the very reasons which require us to assume conscious mind as the ultimate ground of reality lead to certain difficulties of a metaphysical kind. The harmony which the divine purpose slowly brings about is not achieved at any moment in our experience. In any period of time such as the present and the past, the world of nature appears alien to this purpose, and its characteristics cannot be regarded as simply a manifestation of the divine, while the actions of conscious beings include evil volitions for which we shall in vain seek an explanation in the nature of the Divine Will, which is a will to goodness, and they are attributed to finite beings who thus have somehow the power of antagonising the infinite being. The realms of nature and finite mind seem to limit the infinity and absoluteness of God, and the existence of evil seems inconsistent with his omnipotence. Is any solution possible of this ancient problem?

In the first place, as regards infinity. We have reached the idea of the principle or ground of all reality as spiritual, and this principle we call God. In what meaning of the term shall we say that God is infinite? The theory of infinity has been elaborated by mathematicians, and they have arrived at a definition which may be expressed as follows: A class or group or assemblage of elements is infinite if it has a part to which the whole is equivalent in the sense that between the elements composing that part and those composing the whole there subsists a unique and reciprocal (one-to-one) correspondence[1]. This

mathematical infinity

[1] This popular statement is taken, with a slight variation of phrase, from C. J. Keyser, *The Human Worth of Rigorous Thinking* (1916), p. 148; it agrees with the statement in Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, vol. I, p. 121.

definition is derived from the theory of cardinal numbers and is best illustrated by them. Thus the class of all finite numbers except 0 is a part of the class of all finite numbers (including 0), and has this one-to-one correspondence with it, seeing that it can be obtained by adding 1 to each of the terms of the latter. The latter class is infinite; and in the same way the former class also may be shown to be infinite. On the other hand, this correspondence will not hold between a finite number and any of its parts, for example, between the class of all finite numbers up to $n$ ($n$ itself being finite) and the class consisting of the same numbers except 0.

There are two reasons why we should hesitate to apply the term infinite as thus defined to God. In the first place, the definition implies the legitimacy of the conceptions of a least infinite and of greater infinites[1], and therefore cannot express what is distinctive of the divine essence. And in the second place, it is founded on the conception of a class or assemblage which consists of parts, so that, although it may be valid for number, space, and time, it does not follow that it is applicable to God, for we do not conceive him as consisting of parts. God is indeed spoken of as omnipresent and everlasting—concepts which seem to imply infinity in space and in time. But if God is truly spiritual, we shall not regard him as either in space or in time. By his omnipresence we shall mean that there is no part of space beyond his power; he is everlasting because that power reaches throughout all time. It is illegitimate to extend to him as spirit the characteristics which belong to space and time, any more than those which belong to matter.

[1] Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

The term infinite, as applied to God, must therefore have a different meaning from the mathematical, and yet not different in every respect. Beyond any finite number in a series there lie other numbers of the same class; a finite number $n$ has always another number $n + 1$ greater than it and yet of the same class. But an infinite number is a number concerning which this does not hold: there may be greater infinites, but they do not belong to the same class—are not constituted in the same way. Similar truths hold of spatial and temporal infinites. With regard to these features of the mathematical infinite, we may use Spinoza's expression and say that a thing is finite after its kind when it can be limited by another thing of the same nature. When it cannot be so limited it is infinite after its kind. Now, in this meaning of infinite, the term will be applicable to God. There is nothing else of the same nature by which he is limited. And we may even use the term absolutely infinite to describe his nature—not necessarily in Spinoza's way as implying an infinity of attributes each infinite in its kind, but as signifying that there is nothing else of whatever nature by which he is limited.

This, we must remember, gives us only a negative definition of infinite; but, although negative, the characteristic of freedom from limitation is not therefore insignificant. We may still ask, however, whether even this negative characteristic can rightly be applied to God—whether for instance his power is not limited by intractable material or by the antagonisms of finite beings. Both in popular religions and in the views of some thinkers, there may be found the idea of a mind or power which is the highest or supreme being in the universe, at the same

time that the power of this being is conceived as limited, either by a material world which exists independently or by other finite minds who hold their existence by independent right and, although inferior to the highest, have an individuality of the same order. The former view has been rejected by us as failing to treat the universe as a universe, the latter because, although the universal order is recognised, it is not acknowledged as being based upon the reality of the one supreme mind. We may accordingly, at the present stage, pass these views by, and ask whether, in the meaning given to 'infinite,' infinite power can be predicated of the one Supreme Mind on which both the moral and the natural orders depend.

For the view which has been worked out concerning the relation of nature and finite minds to the moral order, a solution of the question is possible, and it is a solution which may be said to depend on the definition of infinity. If by infinity we mean that what is so called cannot be limited even by its own nature or volition, then it is not possible for us to ascribe the term to God: for we have allowed the possibility of finite minds acting counter to the divine purpose, and nature in its actual appearance has not been regarded as a perfectly clear revelation of the divine attributes. But in any view, however completely determinist, will not the same conclusion hold? The infinite is somehow manifested in finite beings. Even if the finite be explained as illusion, it is an illusion of a being which, being under illusion, must be finite. The most coherent system of the unity of all things, such as Spinoza's, is never able to explain how there comes to be a finite world at all, or how its reality can be reconciled with the reality of the One Substance. In producing finite

beings, or in manifesting itself in such appearances, their source or originating principle must be determined either by something outside itself or else simply by its own nature. The former alternative is impossible on any theory of the unity of all reality; the latter means self-limitation. Appearance in finite form means limitation of the infinite, and that limitation can only be due to the infinite's own nature or agency. To deny the power of the infinite thus to limit itself is to deny the infinity of its power, and besides is to render the existence of the finite impossible. And to allow that the infinite can by self-limitation manifest itself in or produce finite beings, but at the same time to deny its power to create free minds as distinct from minds whose future is determined from the beginning, seems an arbitrary limitation of the divine power. Omnipotence, it would seem, is not inconsistent with human freedom; on the contrary to deny the possibility of creating beings who are both finite and free is to restrict the power of the infinite being and thus to render it finite.

If we mean by infinite that which is not limited by anything other than its own nature, then self-limitation is within the power of the infinite. There is no inconsistency of thought in our conceiving finite beings as created by the infinite being and endowed by him with any powers not conflicting with their dependence on him. The same view of infinity enables us to answer certain more or less frivolous puzzles, such as the questions, Can God make two and two equal to five? or virtue the same thing as vice? We may reply that to do these things is not in accordance with the nature of the omnipotent being. For truth and goodness belong to his nature, and his action cannot be conceived as contrary to that nature. His

infinity consists in his freedom from limitation by anything other than himself; it does not consist in an inability to manifest his own nature, or in some imagined power of acting contrary to his nature[1].

The explanation of the term absolute as applied to God will follow similar lines to those on which the term infinite and its application have been justified. As already said, if by the absolute is meant the sum-total of reality, then it must be allowed that there are real events and real beings which do not in their present state manifest the divine nature. But there is nothing outside God in the sense of being independent of his nature or will. Without his concurrence, as it used to be put, there would be no finite activity and no finite beings to act. The independence of finite beings is a communicated and limited independence, their spontaneity a restricted spontaneity: they are due to the divine will and do not exist in spite of it. It is to limit the power of the divine nature, if we make this communication of reality and power impossible for it. And we must remember that, on the most rigid theory of the Absolute, the diversity of its appearances must be admitted—even by those who regard them as only appearances of diversity.

Taken literally, the term absolute implies freedom from relations; and obviously the sum-total of all reality cannot stand in relation to other things, for there are no other things to which it could be related. But, while external relations are impossible, the same does not hold

[1] "The notion of a sort of antecedent logical fate determining all subsequent existence is psychologically explicable as the result—not of the supremacy of our reason—but of the limits of our imagination."—Ward, *Realm of Ends*, p. 227.

of internal relations. Reality as a whole must include all relations within itself. Only by giving up the reality of both things and relations can this proposition be denied. On the monistic scheme the one and all may fitly be termed the Absolute, seeing that all things and all relations belong to its nature. But the application of the term is more doubtful on the theistic view of the world. It is of the essence of theism that God has, by the process which we inadequately term Creation, given an existence to finite beings such that they may be said to stand in relation to him—as his creatures, as doing his will, as alienated from or reconciled to him, or in other ways. All these are relations between God and other beings who have a status such that they must be regarded as other than he. The status is not one of complete independence, because it is itself a manifestation of the divine activity. But it does involve a relation in which God is one term and finite being the other term, so that 'absolute' (at least in its literal meaning) would appear to be a misleading adjective to apply to God. The fulness of his nature makes possible the existence of finite beings who are other than himself, and with whom he can enter into relation.

The Perfection of God.

The perplexities connected with the ideas of infinity and absoluteness are inevitable for any explanation of the relation between finite beings and the ground of reality as a whole, though they appear in their most pointed form in elucidating the doctrine of ethical theism. Here they are part of the difficulty of conceiving the co-existence and co-activity of God and man in the same universe. They are problems of form, however, rather than of content, and their solution does not supply us

with a positive idea of God. This positive idea has to be arrived at from the nature of reality as known to us—the reality which is interpreted through the idea of God. Reality, as we have found, includes certain values of which we have a more or less adequate apprehension; and the realm of nature, or of causation, can be interpreted as belonging to the same universe as the realm of values only by regarding it as instrumental towards the discovery and production of values by finite minds. On this view the idea of the ground of reality, or God, is reached through the idea of value. Here therefore the idea of value is fundamental. Even the attributes of intelligence and power (although postulated on other grounds also) will, from this point of view, be held to belong to the divine nature because of their implication in the idea of value and their necessity for its realisation. The term perfection, which means value or worth at its highest point, is therefore more appropriate in speaking of God, and more significant of his positive nature, than either the term infinite or the term absolute.

If we conceive God as simply infinite being, then our idea of him is reached by the denial of a characteristic of finite beings; and we have only a negative idea of God. But if we conceive him as the perfect being, our idea is positive, it means that certain qualities known to us are present in him in their fulness. To this line of argument also objections have been taken. Just as the idea of God as infinite is a negative idea got by denying the limitations of finite beings, so it has been argued that the positive idea of God as perfect is founded upon the observation of certain qualities actually belonging to finite persons: so that the whole procedure, in the first place, is anthropo-

morphic, an inference from man to God, and in the second place, so far as it has any validity at all, is only analogical, while the difference between God and man is so great that the validity of any analogy must be of the slightest.

A short consideration of these objections will bring out the true nature of the idea. Our idea of God is properly called anthropomorphic when it is arrived at by an inference from or modification of human qualities. In this way if the reasoner starts from the power, goodness, and intelligence of man and argues that God must therefore be powerful, good, and intelligent, only in a higher indeed an infinite degree, then the procedure is anthropomorphic, and we may say that man is making God after his own image. There may be apologies for this procedure, for at least it is true that there is no higher object immediately known to man than the human mind, and it is therefore more reasonable to hold that God is like man than that he resembles other created things. But it is not the procedure that has been adopted in this book. We have not argued that God is good because we find goodness in man, but that he is good because we find the idea of goodness to be valid for that universal order which we are trying to understand. And we speak of his wisdom and his power, not because man has some share of these qualities, but because they are implied in that conception of the world as purposive which is necessary to explain the relation of the order of nature to the moral order. This method of argument is not anthropomorphic, any more than are arguments concerning causal processes or mathematical relations. The latter depend on our apprehension of certain objective connexions just as the former

proceeds from our ideas of objective moral values. The knowledge in both cases is due to our power of knowing, but this does not make it anthropomorphic, for it is a knowledge of relations and of values whose validity is independent of their manifestation in human beings.

But when we try to understand the way in which goodness or wisdom or power belongs to God, we are dependent upon our knowledge of the manifestation of these qualities in finite persons. To this extent our knowledge of the divine attributes rests upon our knowledge of human qualities. From knowledge of the latter we get some indication of the way in which moral and other values belong to personality; while their connexion with the limitations of human personality marks off the features which are peculiar to their realisation in man. Man is a spiritual being, but he is a spirit immersed in matter, restricted in time and space, and sensuous as well as spiritual. Human virtues are the excellences of a being with this double nature; sensuous in his impulses, spiritual in the ideals which are open to him. The moral value which the virtue expresses may have a more or less close connexion with the sensuous basis of man's character, and the virtue accordingly may be less or more akin to the realisation of the same value in a being who is purely spiritual and therefore not subject to the restrictions of a sensuous and material nature. Courage, for instance, and temperance are human virtues which we cannot attribute in anything like their human form to the divine nature, for they postulate obstacles on the part of sense or of impulse to moral performance. The meaning of these virtues lies mainly in the control of unruly desires or impulses. In other virtues the factor of positive worth

is more prominent, and they can be understood without reference to the restrictions of their human embodiment. This is most true in the case of wisdom and of love, which express the fundamental characteristics of the values of truth and of goodness.

Even here the inference from the human mainfestation to the divine is limited by the analogy of the spirit of man to the spirit of God. Wisdom, regarded as a divine attribute, does not imply the human method of knowledge with its precarious advance from step to step and its restricted range. But it does involve all knowledge, though the method of divine apprehension will differ from the human. All truth must be God's, as has been said, intuitively or without the discursive process by which the human understanding mostly works: so that truth may be said to belong to his nature, whereas for man it is something to be attained. Something similar holds true when we speak of the love of God. By moralists love has been regarded as the crowning feature of the virtuous life, and theologians have reached no more profound definition than that God is love. Can it be said that the two qualities—the human love and the divine—are only connected by an uncertain analogy? It is true that love, as used of God, does not connote all that it habitually does in its human manifestations, while on the other hand it must at the same time connote much more. But it does in both cases mean the will to the good of others and the will to communion with them. The good which love seeks is not in either case merely happiness, but rather in the first place the realisation in each person of the values of which he is capable. And the communion which love seeks will be facilitated by agreement as to

the values most cherished. Love is possible as a one-sided relation only; but the communion in which it finds satisfaction is a reciprocal relation. Communion with God is therefore possible only when man's nature is purged from lower desires and his affections set on the things that are more excellent. Only the pure in heart can see God and hold communion with him. Thus the love of God is a will to the good of men which has as its end the communion of man with God, and it is manifested in the secular process whereby the soul is turned from things of sense to spiritual interests and is thus fitted for citizenship in the kingdom of God.

It is in the light of the idea of God, as thus sketched, that we must seek to understand the co-activity of God and man in the world. The world has been spoken of as revealing a divine purpose, and man, who is also purposeful, has been regarded as working out or opposing that purpose. How far is 'purpose' used in the same sense when we thus bring the divine and the human together? For any finite mind, and in any limited system, the purpose implies an end which is outside the actual process; the idea of the end determines the conscious activity; but the end itself lies beyond the action, at the close of the temporal process. Now, reality as a whole can have nothing outside it, its purpose must be within itself; and of reality as a whole God is the ground or reason, so that his purpose and activity cannot be limited by time or space. Thus conceived, the divine purpose must be held to be free from that distinction between means and attainment which characterises finite purposes. Two marks, however, remain which are common to purpose in both

its kinds. The first of these is consciousness: the purpose implies insight and determination by reason or wisdom. The second is value; the whole is somehow good, either goodness realised or goodness sought. In the practical life of morality this good has to be striven for by continuous effort and is achieved only by successive approximations. In this respect, therefore, human and divine purpose are differentiated. But even in human life there are experiences in which this limitation is less obtrusive than it is in morality. In contemplation and in artistic enjoyment the temporal element may almost disappear from consciousness, so that these kinds of life have often seemed to the philosopher or to the artist to approach most nearly to the divine[1]. Perhaps we can have no better analogue of the eternal life.

In this way the human consciousness may be regarded as in touch with the divine. On the other hand the divine purpose, although conceived as in itself free from time and change, cannot be shut off from the process in which it receives temporal fulfilment. This temporal process is in some way its manifestation. Creation, emanation, reproduction, appearance are terms which have been used to indicate the nature of this manifestation. None of them gives any explanation of the origin of the finite from the infinite, or can claim to be more than a metaphor. Behind them, and unanswered by them, lies the question of the way in which we are to conceive the divine purpose as working. Do the decrees of God determine from eternity all that each man does and attains? Does the divine nature draw after it as a necessary consequence the whole history

[1] See a symposium on 'Purpose and Mechanism,' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1912, especially pp. 251–5; cp. also above, p. 393.

of the world? Does it reproduce itself by an inevitable process in each temporal event? The question is put in different ways, but it has seemed to many thinkers that, however put, the answer must be the same. Whether they have preferred to speak of creation, or of emanation, or of appearance, the concept of causation has ruled their thought. No room has been left for the freedom of the finite; ultimately, all activity has been referred to God, or to the fundamental reality, however named. The relation of divine and human agency, therefore, no longer presents any problem, for human activity is explained as merely a necessary consequence of the divine nature or divine decree.

A real problem arises when we recognise that finite spirits are not merely reproductions of or channels for the divine activity but themselves genuinely purposeful and active. God is contemplated as communicating freedom to men that they may attain the values which only free beings can realise and enjoy. Men are free to work out their purposes, and, at the same time, there is a divine purpose in the world which human history fulfils and to which the environment of nature is subordinate. Here God and man meet. The divine purpose is that values should be realised in man's nature, and it can be attained only by man making this purpose his own. Hence the possibility of cooperation and also of conflict; and through the latter arise the sense of estrangement and need of atonement that mark the religious consciousness. How is the agency of both God and man to be conceived without an arbitrary dualism which treats God as if he were simply one member in a finite interaction?

One way of dealing with the difficulty would be to mark off separate spheres for the divine activity and the

human. And this often seems to be the purport of traditional distinctions, such as that between the natural and the supernatural, or between the realms of nature and of grace. The whole region of common life—our dealings with nature and our ordinary social relations—would in this way be assigned to the guidance of man's free will; but, beyond these, a region would be recognised in which the human soul is in contact with the highest. In the presence of God he will be powerless—clay in the hands of the potter, who makes one vessel to honour and another to dishonour. This is the realm of grace; and in it the divine spirit acts upon man irresistibly, choosing him for sonship and training him for communion with God, or else passing him by and leaving him "to the freedom of his own will." But it is not possible thus to split up man's life into two separate regions. The ordinary affairs of common life are affected by the deepest things of the spirit: the soul of man is a unity, though its divine flame may burn feebly in the earthly air. Even the theological ethics, which enforces the distinction between supernatural grace and natural virtue, holds that that grace influences the whole nature of man. Nor can we be content to explain the unequal distribution of grace by a simple appeal to the divine good pleasure, without any regard to man's response. To do so would annul man's freedom at the centre of his being. In meeting and welcoming the divine grace man's spirit is not passive but responsive; and the divine influence comes as a gift and not by compulsion. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock[1]," said the Master. Entry is craved, not

[1] Rev. iii. 20—quoted in this connexion by Professor Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, p. 292.

forced. And there is a secret shrine prepared for his advent:

> This sanctuary of my soul
> Unwitting I keep white and whole,
> Unlatched and lit, if Thou should'st care
> To enter or to tarry there.

Here accordingly the theological doctrine of irresistible grace is relinquished. The spirit of God is conceived as working in and through the spirit of man, but in such a way as not to destroy human freedom. So long as we regard the divine influence as a quasi-mechanical force such a conception is impossible. But it is no longer so when we apply to the problem the idea of God as love. Love works through freedom. Compulsion or threats interfere with freedom; but in love spirit appeals to spirit in virtue of their fundamental affinity. The soul may be immersed in routine without thinking of the deeper things in life, or it may assert its lower interests and remain deaf to the call of God. But that call is to its essential nature and spiritual destiny; and, if the call is answered, the soul finds its freedom in fulfilling the divine purpose.

# XX

## REVIEW AND CONCLUSION

THE question formulated at the outset of our enquiry was whether the facts of morality and ethical principles have any bearing—and if so what bearing—on the idea which we are justified in forming of ultimate reality. Is it possible, it was asked, that we may find in what *should be* a guide towards that which truly *is*? This question has now been answered. But the argument has been long, and it has entailed certain ethical discussions which were perhaps of secondary importance. It may be worth while, therefore, to take this opportunity of looking back upon the line of thought that has been traversed and of distinguishing the critical points in the advance. Only these critical points need be mentioned; and I will attempt, in a series of propositions, to make clear the logical consecutiveness of the steps which have led to the conclusion.

1. I begin with the distinction between knowledge of the individual and knowledge of the universal. Science—in the sense in which the term is commonly, though not very correctly, used—is of the universal or general; it is interested in the individual existent or individual case only as illustrating or helping to prove the general principle; it terminates in laws or formulae; and its ideal is a science like mathematical physics. On the other hand, history is concerned with the individual; it requires general concepts and universal principles, but only as

ancillary to its purpose; its ultimate interest is in the individual not in the universal. Whenever our true interest is to understand the individual—whether the individual be a man, or a nation, or an institution, or the solar or stellar system in its evolution—our study differs from science commonly so called, however much it may be aided by universal principles and abstract reasoning. In certain subjects the interest is divided between the individual and the universal. Geology and biology, for instance, are on the border-line and incline to one side or the other according as the interest of the enquirer is in the history of the earth or of living beings, or in the general principles which have determined their course.

Now, not only is man himself an individual, but ultimate reality is an individual. Indeed it may be said that nothing else has complete individuality. Of it there is and can be no other example. But persons also have individuality, though of a less complete kind, owing to their uniqueness and to the consciousness which gives each a being for himself. Material things, on the other hand, have an individuality much less clearly marked, and their arrangement as distinct units is largely determined by human interests. Accordingly, notwithstanding the abstract arguments which enter into philosophy, its ultimate interest is in the individual.

2. In studying the individual—any individual—we begin with a first apprehension of it as a whole; next, we proceed to discriminate the different elements or factors of this object (and here is the region of analysis); then, with clearer knowledge of each factor, we attempt a synthesis; and, finally, we seek once more to see the object as a whole—to grasp its unity again, but with fuller

information about its diverse features. Further, in the case of any individual, we distinguish two fundamental aspects—in respect of one of which we describe its properties, and trace the connexion of its parts with one another and of the object as a whole with other objects; while, in respect of the other aspect, we appreciate the value of the individual, and say that it has a certain worth. It is convenient to speak of these two aspects as that of causes and that of values. And it is to be noted that it is the investigation of causes that has led to the chief generalisations of physical and natural science, and that it has thus tended to direct interest towards the universal or general rather than towards the individual with which it begins, whereas, on the other hand, value resides in the concrete existent: it belongs to the individual, not to the law or general concept.

3. The laws which determine value are not of the same order as the laws which determine the causal or other connexions of things and persons. It is conceivable that a thing may be without value altogether, but it has always causal connexions and can always be described. And, in general, the value which we are in the habit of ascribing to material things is never value in the strict sense, but only a means to value: in technical language, it is instrumental, not intrinsic. Intrinsic values—at any rate, intrinsic moral values—belong to persons only.

4. These intrinsic values, however, are not less objective, not less a part or aspect of reality, than the qualities or the causal connexions which we ascribe to things and persons. There are only two alternatives. Either they are objective, or else they have no reality outside the mind of the subject who affirms them. And every argument

which is relevant in support of the latter alternative would be equally relevant to prove that neither things nor their relations nor other persons exist outside the mind of the subject who asserts that they exist. The grounds for denying the objectivity of morality are equally grounds for denying the objectivity of knowledge. And as any argument with another person implies the latter's personal existence and implies also that arguer and argued-with are 'up against' the same world, it is legitimate to assume the objectivity of knowledge and consequently at the same time the objectivity of morality.

5. The enquiry was narrowed down to the moral values and their bearing on philosophy, to the exclusion of other values—to goodness rather than to truth and beauty. Of moral values it clearly holds that it is in persons that they are realised, not in mere things, and that they belong to persons in as truly objective a sense as any other characteristics belong to them. But something more than this is true. It is not merely the value actually realised in some one's conscious life that must be held to belong to objective reality. In bringing value into existence the individual person is conscious of a standard or ideal which has validity as a guide for his personal endeavour, or of an obligation which rests upon him. The attainment of value is recognised as a value only because of its conformity with this standard or law of value, or because of its approximation to this ideal of value. It follows therefore that the value or goodness actually achieved in personal life implies as its ground or condition a standard or ideal of goodness. Accordingly, we are compelled to form the conception of an ideal good or of a moral order, which, as the condition of actualised

goodness, must also be regarded as in some sense having objective reality.

6. The whole burden of the later portion of the argument lies upon the way in which we are to understand and explain this objectivity of the moral ideal or moral order. The starting-point is that it is not merely subjective—a figment of the imagination or the understanding—but that it belongs somehow to the real or objective order in virtue of which the world is what it is. Reality must include it, and our view of ultimate reality must show what its place is. By ultimate reality is not meant material existents, or even the realm of persons, but that which is the ground of everything that is real. A comprehensive view of reality must include an account of things and persons, laws, and values, as dependent upon this ultimate ground. If we are unable to reach a view of it as a whole, then we have attained no philosophy; if we can reach such a view, then we must be able to see how existing beings and the laws or orders of their behaviour on the one side, and the realm of moral values on the other side, harmonise so as together to make a unity.

7. Reality as a whole includes within it many distinctions: all diversity, we should rather say, is within this whole. If we would understand its organic or systematic unity, we must see how these diversities can be reconciled in one whole. This involves many and various problems. But the most fundamental of all the distinctions which thought discloses is that between the two aspects of reality already discriminated—that of the connectedness of its parts, which we may call the natural order or the realm of causation, and that of the values which it contains, which we may call the moral order or the realm of ends.

The chief problem, therefore, for any synoptic or philosophical view of reality is the attainment of a point of view from which we can regard these two aspects as aspects of a whole. And the difficulty before which we came to a halt in working out this problem is just that fact upon which the most serious reflexion of all ages has concentrated—the lack of congruity between the natural order and the moral order. Their laws are entirely different: causal connectedness on the one hand, ideal valuation on the other. Their phenomenal appearances diverge: a law which is indifferent to morality produces effects of one kind; the inexorable categorical imperative requires action of another. Man, in whom the two meet, seems in the grip of conflicting powers, and unable to reconcile his allegiance to both.

8. This problem, accordingly, may be used as a test for deciding between different philosophical theories of reality. Such theories have often originated simply from the endeavour to explain the world and man as existing facts. The various forms of naturalism and of idealism are sometimes presented in this way; morality and value generally are left over as something consequential, whose explanation is to be found in theories derived from a different order of phenomena. But moral experience, and the moral order of which we are conscious, are part of the material which we have to take into account before we have a right to accept any philosophical theory or to adopt it as an adequate point of view for the interpretation of reality as a whole. If the customary examination of such theories does not give a clear decision of the philosophical problem, one reason at least for this indecision is that the theories have been based too exclusively upon

the facts of physical and psychical existence and have taken too little account of the other aspect of our experience, that which has to do with values.

Naturalistic theories were barely mentioned in my argument owing to their inability even to explain law in nature and the facts of psychical existence, as well as because they are obliged to deny the objectivity of moral and other values. But not naturalism only, but also certain theories in which spiritual reality is affirmed, were found unable to satisfy our test. Pluralism was compelled to acknowledge an order of law and an order of values which were inexplicable in a universe where finite monads or selves alone are real. And those forms of idealistic theory which accentuate the unity of the world after the manner of monism or pantheism, were seen to be inadequate, and that for the express reason that they give no tenable explanation of the existing incongruity between the natural order and the moral order. It was found that monism—in spite of its emphasis on unity, and in spite of the appearance of rigid demonstration which has been given to it—tended in two opposite directions. On the one hand, it leaned to naturalism and gave purely naturalistic explanations of good and evil; on the other hand, everything became absorbed in One, and for this mystic vision the world and individual men with the values which they cherish disappeared in illusion. In neither way was the monistic doctrine of the all as one able to comprehend in its view both the order of nature and the moral order, and to find an explanation of the discrepancy which they present to our experience.

9. In analysing the positive conditions of the reconciliation of this discrepancy it was found that these

conditions were two. In the first place we must be able to explain how it is that the persons, in whom moral values have to be realised, do as a matter of fact realise them so imperfectly and make such slow progress in their efforts to realise them. And, in the second place, we should be able to show how it is that the order of the world as a causal system displays such apparent indifference to the standard of good and evil.

The explanation of the former difficulty relied on the postulate of individual freedom; and a defence of that postulate was offered. Freedom is essential for the explanation which I offer. The question is, How is it that persons do not realise the moral order of the universe? and the answer is, that moral values can be realised by free beings only: that freedom is necessary for goodness; that mere correctness of behaviour is not a realisation of that high value of which man is capable, which requires its free choice and attainment; and that the world would be a less noble and worthy event than it is if it did not contain the values which can be realised only by free beings, and therefore cannot be purchased except by the gift which makes evil possible as well as good.

The second difficulty can be explained only by the interpretation of the world as a purposive system, and this interpretation also was defended. We must postulate purpose in the world as well as freedom in man. The world with its order of natural law cannot be explained from its present appearance only: not only its justification but also its explanation depends upon the final issue; and we must have regard to the ends which it is adapted to serve. Its purpose cannot be to make the world a fit environment for perfect beings: it is not such, and there are no perfect

beings on its surface. Nor can it be to return to each man the just rewards of his deeds, for it does not fulfil this purpose. But, even in its incongruities with the unchanging moral order, the world of nature may be regarded as a fit medium for the fashioning and training of moral beings. We are led to acknowledge this purpose by recognising that the moral order belongs to the order of reality; and the manner of its achievement is made intelligible by the postulate of freedom.

10. With the recognition of this mode of harmonising the order of nature with the moral order, it is not any longer possible to regard both orders or either as merely unconscious law. The order of nature intends a result which is not found at any particular stage in the process of existence. It requires an idea of the process as a whole and of the moral order to which nature is being made subservient. It means therefore intelligence and the will to good as well as the ultimate source of power. In this way, the recognition of the moral order, and of its relation to nature and man, involves the acknowledgment of the Supreme Mind or God as the ground of all reality.

This is the conclusion of the central argument of this book. It gives a point of view from which reality may be interpreted without the incongruities into which other theories fall; and it succeeds in making intelligible just those features of experience which it is most difficult to combine into a harmonious view of the whole. At the same time, as I have repeatedly admitted, it does not solve all problems or remove all difficulties. It does not explain each particular situation, or the unique character of any particular person. Our knowledge of the details

and of the issues of life is far too meagre to admit of our having more than a general principle of explanation. So far as the individual problem gets a solution at all, it is usually through the religious faith of the individual person; and there are few things more venturesome, or more offensive, than the attempt of any one else to interpret for him the 'ways of providence.' And, even within the region of general principles, there are questions left over, which may not be entirely ignored, though some of them carry us beyond the limits of the present enquiry.

It may appear that the line of thought which has been followed has tended to magnify morality overmuch, both in respect of the intellectual inferences which it justifies and as regards its place in life as a whole. On the other hand it may seem, in apparent conflict with this view of the supremacy of morality, that undue stress has been laid, at a critical turn of the argument, on the facts of moral failure and on the imperfection of the world. Concerning both these points, something should be said; and the latter, which is the simpler, may be taken first.

It was allowed—though only for the sake of argument —that if the world and man had presented a picture of complete adaptation to one another, in which there was no trace at all of imperfection, we might have been content to find in the conception of law—a law which might then have been regarded as at once natural and moral—an adequate explanation of reality, and that we should not have needed to go behind the law and make the inference to conscious intelligence and goodness. But it was argued that, since the facts do not exhibit this perfection, another explanation must be sought of the relation of nature to morality: an imperfect world, it was said, was required

for the making of moral beings; they had to be tried in, and habituated to, all kinds of circumstances, in order that they might grow into goodness. Hence the very imperfection of the world was used as an argument pointing to the theistic conclusion.

But it was not said that free beings were necessarily only imperfectly moral, or that it was impossible for perfect moral goodness to exist in the midst of imperfect surroundings. Had man been morally perfect and had it been possible for his will to be firm though free, there would have been no need—no excuse, one may say—for the imperfection of the world he lives in. But, as he is free and needs to grow into goodness, the imperfection is an essential condition of the making of the good man. The completion of this process would not make him unable to live in this world, as Herbert Spencer imagined. The moral man, as ordinarily conceived, is the man who is able to adopt and does adopt the moral attitude in all the ordinary circumstances of his life. The completely moral man or morally perfect man is the man who would adopt this moral attitude in any possible circumstances.

Morality is of such great importance among the values because, as I have put it, it is not envious or exclusive. It does not, like the other values, depend upon certain special circumstances or some special endowment of intellect or skill. It can be exhibited in any circumstances whatever. In every situation there is always a right or moral reaction; and this reaction is simply an attitude of will; so that goodness is realised even when power is wanting to achieve the result which will make the good will manifest to the eyes of men. At the same time the will which adapts itself morally to one set of circumstances

may not be so firmly set towards good as to achieve moral adaptation to circumstances in which the temptations are different or which call for a greater effort. Thus the variety of natural and social conditions offers a training ground for the good will, which may pass from range to range of experience perfecting its own nature and contributing to the improvement of its environment. The growth of morality is always marked by firmer stability of character, diminished danger of straying from the right way, increased ability to deal with new and unexpected situations. Placed in the midst of an imperfect environment, a will trained to goodness in this way endeavours to moralise the environment—to make it contributory to the realisation of value. And, when this has been accomplished, the agent will have become qualified to deal with new and more complicated conditions, and to solve new practical problems offered by fresh situations. The right use of his talents in ordinary affairs will have fitted him to be a wise ruler of ten cities.

Concerning the limits of the argument from morality not much needs to be added. It has not been put forward as, of itself and alone, constituting a rigidly demonstrative proof; still less has it been suggested that it excludes, instead of facilitating, other methods of approach to the theistic point of view. The way is not from the categorical imperative alone. From nature and art and knowledge men have risen to the contemplation of God and found in him the key to the problems of life. Each in his own way, and each starting from his own interest, has sought and often has found, in the idea of the world as a revelation of God, a view which has satisfied his desire to see

beneath the appearances of things and to grasp the meaning of life. Yet this much may be asserted, that, when such views neglect altogether the moral aspect of reality or try to explain it away, they are apt to be an erring guide to knowledge and to confer a doubtful practical boon.

Much more important, however, are the considerations which may force themselves upon us pointing to the limits of morality itself.

In the first place, morality has been regarded in my argument as restricted to the will in its relation to the moral ideal; and the content of the moral ideal was not found to be an easy thing to define. A final definition, indeed, is not possible, for knowledge of the moral ideal grows in clearness and fulness as character approximates to it. As we have seen, it can be expressed best as a spirit or tendency in which the higher human capacities and the harmony of man with man triumph over sensual and selfish impulses. This is the characteristic of the good will, that it is guided by the highest and by the spirit of unity with others. But what the higher interests and capacities of man are—this question may seem to have received a less distinct answer. Indeed, an answer cannot be given without reference to the other values—of truth and beauty, for instance—which we recognise as having a superior claim to that of the demands of comfortable living or the satisfaction of appetite and impulse. In the widest sense of the word, therefore, ethics might be used to signify the whole realm of values, while morality proper is restricted to the virtuous attitude towards them. Morality includes the will to these values, but the values themselves and their worth are independent.

In the second place, morality seems to be limited in another way. Suppose all values realised, what would become of morality? There would be no further good to which to reach forward; attainment would put an end to endeavour; and the moral ideal, thus reached, would seem to destroy the moral life in the act of perfecting it. Suppose the moral purpose of the world to be achieved, and the time-process still to go on. What is there for the fully moralised man to do in the perfected environment? Herbert Spencer tried to describe his private life; and in his account it comes very much to this, that he might still eat and sleep and beget sons and daughters. There is not much about the higher values in this picture of the heavenly life upon earth. But why should the perfect man even do the things which Spencer leaves for him wherewith to fill up the inane blank of his existence? If he and his surroundings are fully moralised, how can he desire the change which action involves? and, if he does act, is it not because there is still room for desire, so that the imagined future is better than the present, and, after all, he "never is, but only to be blest"?

Thus morality seems to be limited in two ways: first, by its dependence on other values; and secondly, by the conditions of the time-process, which entail unending endeavour and the struggle for a better—a struggle which seems capable of victorious termination only with the disappearance of time itself. These two limitations compel further reflexion.

The former is not a very serious or difficult matter. A full view of the worth of life must take all values into account, not merely those which, from their specific

reference to character and volition, are called moral values. Yet it is significant that value does thus fall asunder into different ideals—that the artist may be indifferent to the ordinary moralities and to all kinds of science; that the philosopher may be without the eye for beauty or the will to goodness; and that the good man may be neither an artist nor a philosopher. There are, in most cases and for most men, many and more pressing claims upon moral conduct than the production of beauty or the pursuit of truth. The man of science and the artist have often been reproached for selfishness, even when no other fault is found with them, while the interest in truth for its own sake is often suspected by the practical man and sometimes explained away by the philosopher. Yet, if we suppose the ordinary moralities perfected in men generally, even to the degree in which they are now perfected within some limited ranges of social conditions, what better things would there be to live for than just those ideals which science and art take for their own? And would we think any society worth living in in which they were disregarded, or in which specially gifted minds did not make them their chief pursuit?

The independence of the different values, moreover, is only partial, and it is not entirely onesided. We have seen how, in certain conditions, morality falls back upon the other values, and takes them as its ideals, so that the good will finds satisfaction in their pursuit and attainment. And this may perhaps have suggested the view that these latter values have complete independence—that truth and beauty can stand alone, in no way affected by the moral character of their exponents. But the facts of life do not support this conclusion. The pursuit of truth and of beauty

are themselves modes of moral activity. They may often indeed come into conflict with the more elementary moralities; yet this conflict is of the same nature as more familiar conflicts of duties. An artist may prefer beauty to honesty as another man may prefer generosity to justice, and thereby follow a course which does not bring out the highest value in his power. 'Art for art's sake,' 'truth at any cost' may be excellent maxims; it is only when art or truth, or anything else short of the highest good in one's power, is treated as the sole value in life, that the maxims become unethical.

Human nature is so imperfectly unified that a man may show high devotion to one region of values and treat all the others with neglect or contempt. But he does so at his peril. He loses thereby his own chance of developing a complete and harmonious character, and he risks also his perfection in the art or science of his choice. Morality cannot be isolated from any part of life. The ideas of good and evil which direct the lives of men are also formative influences upon their artistic production in picture or poem or building. Nor can knowledge claim to be completely independent of character. Character determines interest, and interest selects its objects and its method. It was not mere fancy that led theosophist and alchemist to hold that the mind that would find out the hidden things of the world must be purged from bodily and selfish desire, and that the philosopher's stone can be touched by none but clean hands. Only the pure in heart can see God.

But, if we have this purity of heart, and if, in addition, the eye is satisfied with seeing and the mind with knowing —if all values are realised—does anything further remain

for men of good will or for the people of God? Or is there only, as the Scriptures say, 'a rest'?

This is the final question, and it may be said that it will find its answer in that realm of religious values into which we have not entered. There, certainly, if anywhere. But even into this region difficulties press, and we meet problems which it is hard to solve. How are we to conceive this communion with God in which the whole ethical life attains its perfection and passes into another form? The enterprise is over: goodness has been achieved; all beauty is in our presence; knowledge is swallowed up in sight. But does the beatific vision content us? Who shall say—when his eyes are not yet fit to behold it—in what manner his transfigured spirit would receive this new experience? We can only look forward from the far distance of our present point of view, feeling always that our halting logic, with its 'either—or,' may be put out of court by a view of reality which we cannot now conceive.

If we let our anticipation confront the distant issue, there would seem to be only two ways in which we can regard it; and on either way difficulties emerge.

Can we assert that the training of the active life has been of such a kind as to fit a man for the contemplative life, so that in the beatific vision he will really find the satisfaction of his nature? If he has been bred in the world's struggle, has learned to endure hardness and to hold the right against all comers, finding in each situation that opens a new adventure of goodness, discovering and creating values in a world that seemed reluctant to admit them—if this has been his experience (and it is the good man's common lot), how will he adapt himself to the restful contemplation of an ideal that is fully realised, so

that effort and enterprise are no longer needed? Will he not rather beg that he may be allowed to refresh himself for a moment in the vision and then begin the quest anew? It will be the same with others. The artist may be enchanted with the perfection of beauty; but will he be content to be only a gazer? Will not the artist in him demand a material not yet beautiful to which he may convey the new ideas he has received? Would he not willingly forgo some of the fulness of that beauty that it might be his lot to contribute something to the picture or to transfer his own visions to a virgin canvas? This is what his career has fitted him to do, and life seems worthless unless he can continue his work. It is the thinker who is responsible for the ideal of the contemplative life; he shaped the conception of the beatific vision. But would it suffice even for the thinker? After the toil of thought is truth by itself sufficient? Is not the impulse strong to seek new problems and fresh fields of enquiry, so that knowledge may be continually enlarged and insight deepened? And, if everything is disclosed to his view in a single vision, is there not an arrest of the faculties that have been trained by assiduous exercise? The wings are preened for a new flight, but they beat in vain against the subtler air. The contemplative life which the thinker really prizes is, after all, not a single and eternal beatific vision, but a life in which truth after truth is discovered as the result of repeated intellectual effort. And time and again the philosophers themselves have acknowledged that it is so. Witness the words of Malebranche: "If I held truth captive in my hand, I should open my hand and let it fly, in order that I might again pursue and capture it." And Lessing's choice has become almost

proverbial. "Did the Almighty," he said, "holding in his right hand Truth, and in his left Search after Truth, deign to tender me the one I might prefer, in all humility, but without hesitation, I should request Search after Truth." "It is not the goal but the course which makes us happy," it has been said[1]. How can man's nature, trained in the stress of mundane adventure, be satisfied with a finished course, a goal from which there is no further advance?

Morality, as we know it, consists in a life which never rests satisfied in the present but is always pressing onwards to fresh achievements. Experience does not fit a man for motionless ease, but for new endeavour. The beatific vision itself, unless it inspire him to higher service, may seem to him a temptation to emotional indulgence unworthy of the free man. One of two things he will be apt to demand of the future: either that the call of service come to him anew, and that fresh enterprises may be his, or else that his individual life may lapse into the source of all being.

Can we tell which is to be the issue? Must absorption in the one source of all life be the end, and must the true goal of life's fitful fever be the surrender of that separate individuality which has given its surpassing interest to the moral drama of the world? If the time-process itself is but a transitory phase of reality, if

> The Bird of Time has but a little way
> To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing,

then it may be that values will still persist; but of what lies beyond for the soul of man we can form no idea, and in the realm of eternal values morality as we now

[1] The quotations are to be found in Hamilton, *Lectures on Metaphysic*, vol. I, p. 13.

know it will have reached its limit. If this is to be the end, a question remains—a question which the ethical view of reality may not shirk. How is the end better than the beginning? does the goal justify the course? For what purpose the infinite pain and effort of individuals, if their free consciousness must be relinquished, perhaps just when it has proved itself worthy of freedom? All that remains of their efforts could surely have been attained without their intervention. No time-process would have been needed to realise it, and the world would have been spared the evil and suffering of which it has been the scene. The one purpose which, so far as I can see, justifies the field of havoc through which the world passes to better things, is the creation of those values which only free minds can realise. And if free minds, when perfected, are to pass away, even for absorption in God, then that value is lost; and we must ask again the question, with less confidence in the answer, whether the values which the world's history offers are worth the price that has been paid for them.

But if absorption is not the goal, and free minds still endure, it is hardly possible to regard them as passing their time in the restful bliss of some paradise of the medieval pattern. For a life such as that—if life it can be called—would do little or nothing to bring to light the values and capacity for the creation of values which are the ripe fruit of moral experience. Beautiful souls are always something more than beautiful; they have a moral energy which inactivity would not content. Surely there has been much irrelevant suffering in the making of such souls if, after the struggle has given them command of circumstances, all enterprise is shut off from them.

What lies beyond we cannot tell, and it is vain to imagine. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." But if free minds endure, it must surely be for a range of activity suited to the capacities and values which they have acquired in their mundane experience. And if, here or elsewhere, they attain that complete harmony between will and ideal in which moral perfection consists, they will surely be fitted thereby for nobler enterprise. It is not true that it is impossible for a morally perfect man to exist and work in an imperfect world. The view is merely an echo of a narrowly hedonistic theory of what constitutes goodness and perfection. On the contrary, the more perfect a man is, the greater is the variety of conditions in which he will master each situation and prove his goodness. As long as the time-process continues we can conceive free minds as working towards the goal of moral perfection; we can even think of them as, themselves made perfect, still pressing forward into new and untried ways, enhancing the values of the world. It is not only evil (that is, moral evil) that has to be mastered. The artist or the man of science has not been fighting against moral evil in his effort to produce things of beauty or to enlarge the sphere of knowledge; and yet he has been producing values. In this way it is conceivable that moral evil might be overcome, and yet that adventure would not cease. There would still be call and room for pressing further into the unknown and making all things subservient to the values which it is the function of free spirits to realise.

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